

Kit Siang denies 'Malai-seh' slogan, calls Zul Noordin 'irresponsible liar'
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BY CLARA CHOOI

KUALA LUMPUR, May 13 — Lim Kit Siang today denied that he or the DAP had called for the death of Malays with the term "Malai-seh" during the bloody May 1969 riots, saying Datuk Zulkifli Noordin had committed sedition and criminal defamation with the allegation.

Lim, who is frequently targeted by right-wing Malay leaders as the protagonist behind the country's worse racial clash in history, said Zulkifli's remarks were merely lies uttered by a man who voters had rejected in the just-concluded Election 2013.

"After having been rejected in Shah Alam, even by the Malay voters, he continues to tell irresponsible lies.

"Now he speaks about May 13, accusing me of being responsible for the riots and for the slogan 'Malai-seh'. It is not at all true, I was not even in Kuala Lumpur at the time," Lim (picture) told The Malaysian Insider when contacted.

The Gelang Patah MP said the accusation was just a "figment" of Zulkifli's imagination, and explained that the words "Malai-seh" had never been linked to him or any DAP leader in the White Paper on the May 13, 1969 incident.

He added that the White Paper had noted that an illegal procession had been held and the slogan "Malai-seh" was tossed about then but it was never linked to a particular individual.

In a series of postings on Twitter yesterday, Zulkifli accused the DAP and Lim of being behind the 1969 race riots, even as Umno leaders continue to blame last week's poor election results on a "Chinese tsunami" that was fanned by the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) party.

The controversial Perkasa vice-president, who was a direct Barisan Nasional (BN) losing candidate in Election 2013, made the allegations in a series of tweets sent out on the eve of the 44th anniversary of the riots.

"Tomorrow is May 13... the 44th anniversary of race riots in Malaysia which was the atrocity of chauvinists including Kit Siang's party which used the slogan Malai-Seh or Die Malays," he tweeted late last night.

But former Umno member Tamrin Ghafar had already cleared Lim while on the stump of the Election 2013 campaign trail, saying that Umno itself was behind the riot.

The son of former Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba said he was told by former home minister, the late Tun Ghazali Shafie, that the May 13 riots were likely the result of an internal Umno coup against founding Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman.

According to police records, 196 people were killed in the riots which were largely clashes between Malay and Chinese groups, following the results of the general election held a few days earlier.

In the 1969 elections, the Alliance coalition of Umno, the MCA and MIC lost the popular vote but won the elections.

Lim said he regards Zulkifli's remarks with "utter contempt" but did not say if he would take any action against the former Kulim Bandar Baharu MP, simply labelling the latter "desperate".

"If he had said it during the campaign, my immediate recourse would be to cite him for sedition or criminal defamation and a police report can be lodged, or legal action taken.

"Now, I regard this with utter contempt," he said.

When contacted, DAP publicity secretary Tony Pua said Zulkifli had lost his right to speak on behalf of Malaysians after he lost his bid for the Shah Alam federal seat in a contest against incumbent Khalid Samad of PAS.

The Petaling Jaya Utara MP added, however, that with Zulkifli running riot with his remarks without earning repudiation from BN or Umno leaders, it was clear that the controversial leader was representative "of what Umno is today".

"Umno is becoming more and more far-right as they seek to protect their shrinking voter base," he said.

Umno and its president, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, have blamed a "Chinese tsunami" for its losses in the just-concluded May 5 polls, despite several analyses of the results pointing to a urban-rural divide rather than a Malay-Chinese division. While a majority of Chinese backed PR parties, a significant number of Malay voters also voted for the opposition parties, particularly in urban centres.

Since the DAP became the target of Umno attacks, it has been backed by its PR partners PKR and PAS which are largely Malay parties.

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