

On May 13, Utusan calls for Malay political unity
Malaysian Insider
May 13, 2013
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 13 — Utusan Malaysia ran a series of stories today, repeating calls for both Umno and PAS to unite for the sake of the Malay race and Islam after the recent general election where the Malays allegedly lost their political upper hand to the Chinese.

With its front-page headline "Bersatulah Melayu" (Malays unite), the Umno-owned broadsheet quoted several speakers from a forum called "GE13 post-mortem: Muslim leadership and survival" yesterday, including maverick PAS politician Nasharuddin Mat Isa who moved again to revive unity talks between the Islamist party and ruling Umno.

"The Malay-Muslim unity agenda through Umno and PAS's co-operation must go on ... The call was voiced by former PAS deputy president Nasharuddin Mat Isa (picture) who asked Malay-Muslim leaders to realise the reality that the race and religion's futures are now being torn by certain parties," said Utusan today.

The PAS conservative, who was edged out by the party's progressives during their 2011 internal polls, insisted yesterday that negotiations to unite both warring Malay-centric parties must continue for the sake of strengthening Islam and the position of the Malay race in the country.

"To me, the unity of PAS and Umno must be a continuing agenda. I only cannot accept it when what is being pursued in the unity between PAS and Umno, there are those who say their face should be spat on.... what religious teaching is this?" said Nasharuddin.

The daily also quoted former PAS and PKR member Datuk Zulkifli Noordin who raised the spectre of May 13 by accusing the DAP and its veteran Lim Kit Siang of being behind Malaysia's worst race riots.

Zulkifli had accused the DAP of using the slogan "Malai-Seh" (Die Malays) in the 1969 bloody riots, and had asked yesterday whether Malays have truly "died" after certain parties are now willing to work together with "racist" DAP and "extremist and chauvinist" Lim.

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

On its Page 3, Utusan ran the story "Berjihad perkasa Perlembagaan" (Jihad to strengthen the Constitution) where former appeals court judge Datuk Mohd Noor Abdullah urged the Malays not compromise in having a Malay prime minister, menteri besar and chief minister.

Mohd Noor had yesterday urged the Malays to be more aggressive to strengthen political and economic power to avoid being regarded as a weak race in their own country.

As a result, DAP chairman Karpal Singh has urged the police to cite the former judge for sedition, claiming that Mohd Noor had used provocative language when he warned the Chinese of a Malay backlash for their alleged "betrayal" of BN in last Sunday's polls.

In Election 2013, BN had won the polls but lost the popular vote, prompting Umno president

Datuk Seri Najib Razak to suggest a "Chinese tsunami" had caused his BN to record its worst-ever electoral results.

Utusan has also suggested Chinese voters were provoking race tensions by voting against BN, with one headline last week asking the question "Apa lagi Cina mahu? (What else do the Chinese want?)"

The newspaper — seen as being aligned with Dr Mahathir — and other party leaders have consistently argued that votes against the Umno-led BN were akin to voting against the Malays.

This is despite the fact that Pakatan Rakyat parties PAS and PKR are largely Malay-Muslim in their membership. The DAP also fielded Malay candidates in the elections.

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