

**Those who erase Umno are 'traitors', says Perkasa  
Malaysian Insider  
May 28, 2013  
By Boo Su-Lyn**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 — Perkasa has labelled those attempting to erase Umno as "traitors", even as Barisan Nasional (BN) mulls transforming itself into a single multi-racial political party after its dismal performance in Election 2013.

Datuk Abd Rahman Abu Bakar, the acting chief of the Malay right-wing group, also said that Perkasa would "fight till the end" against the reinvention of the ruling coalition — which comprises race-based parties Umno, MCA, MIC and other component parties — as a single party in the Malay-majority country.

"Whoever erases Umno or changes from the original intentions to set up Umno — they're traitors to Umno," said Abd Rahman in an exclusive interview with The Malaysian Insider.

"Umno must become the leader. They must remain as they are," added the Perkasa deputy president.

But BN will still likely be led by a Malay even if it is turned into a single political party due to support from the Malay-majority membership, Umno secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor told The Malaysian Insider.

BN won just 133 out of 222 federal seats in Election 2013, down from 140 in Election 2008, as urban and middle-class voters deserted the coalition, allowing Pakatan Rakyat (PR) to win the popular vote and to retain Selangor and Penang — the two most industrialised states in Malaysia.

The last time that BN lost the popular vote was in 1969 when it contested as the Alliance party then that comprised Umno, MCA and MIC, representing the Malay, Chinese and Indian communities respectively.

BN lynchpin Umno, however, scored a bigger victory in Election 2013 by winning 88 out of the ruling coalition's 133 federal seats, up from the 79 seats it won out of BN's 140 seats in Election 2008.

MCA, on the other hand, recorded its worst performance in history by winning just seven out of the 37 federal seats it contested in the May 5 general election.

Abd Rahman said that Perkasa would turn into a political party to fight for the Malay community if Umno were gone.

"The Malays will have no party. Then Perkasa will take over," he said.

The powerful Malay lobby group, whose patron is former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, has 407,000 registered members throughout the country.

Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak said over the weekend that the ruling coalition must adapt to changes in the political landscape to remain relevant, stressing that its previous strategy would not necessarily be a "suitable recipe for the future".

Gerakan acting president Datuk Chang Ko Youn said last Wednesday that BN should merge into a single multi-racial party to gain support from the youth and urban electorate, pointing out that urbanites had voted across racial lines in the May 5 general election.

Abd Rahman also said Perkasa's campaign for BN in the 13th general election had increased Malay support for the ruling coalition, highlighting Umno's increased seats.

"This has been admitted by Tun Dr Mahathir who said that Perkasa has done a good job to ensure that Malays come back and give support to Barisan Nasional," he said.

He added that Perkasa's events throughout the country during Election 2013 had regularly drawn crowds of between 1,000 and 3,000 people.

"It shows that Malays are supporting us," said Abd Rahman.

He said that Perkasa president Datuk Ibrahim Ali, who is currently on a leave of absence, had failed to retain the Pasir Mas federal seat in the 13th general election because the latter could not run on a BN ticket.

"He had to stand as an independent candidate," said Abd Rahman.

"Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had said 'don't vote for independent candidates'. To the Umno people in Pasir Mas, it made them confused into not giving support to independent candidates," he added, referring to the deputy prime minister and BN deputy chairman.

Ibrahim lost in a straight contest for Pasir Mas against PAS's Nik Mohamad Abduh Nik Abdul Aziz by over 8,000 votes. The BN candidate had failed to file his nomination papers, a move that many perceived as BN's indirect endorsement of the controversial Perkasa leader.

Abd Rahman also said that Perkasa vice-president Datuk Zulkifli Noordin failed to wrest the Shah Alam federal seat from incumbent PAS's Khalid Samad because Zulkifli did not have enough time to work in the constituency, noting that his candidacy was announced shortly before nomination day.

He stressed that Perkasa was still "relevant", saying that Ibrahim and Zulkifli's losses did not show public rejection of the Malay lobby group.

He also said that BN states should convert Islamic religious "pondoks" (shacks) into proper religious schools, as what is practised in Johor.

"Malay students should be given religious schooling," said Abd Rahman, adding that religious study sessions could be held in the afternoon.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/those-who-erase-umno-are-traitors-says-perkasa/>

