

Reserve DPM post for Malays and indigenous people, says Ridhuan Tee
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By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, June 3 — The deputy prime minister post should be reserved for the Malays or indigenous communities of Malaysia, controversial columnist Dr Ridhuan Tee Abdullah said today.

He also expressed worry about the proposal to merge Barisan Nasional (BN) into a single party, pointing to what he saw as the resulting reduced voice of the Malay-based party Umno.

He was criticising a group of people he only labelled as “ultra kiasu”, claiming that they had allegedly called for at least three deputy prime ministers, each representing those from Sabah and Sarawak, Chinese and Indian communities.

“To me, the most qualified to be TPM is the Malays, Orang Asli and Sabah and Sarawak representatives. Full stop. Their position is so clear. They are layak (fit) to be TPM for Malaysia, because they know and understand Malaysian history. They menyahut (respond to) the national agenda and their Malay language is tip-top. The rest not necessarily,” Tee (picture) wrote in local daily Utusan Malaysia. TPM is the Malay acronym for deputy prime minister.

He supported the idea of reserving the country’s prime minister and deputy prime minister posts for the Malays, pointing to the supremacy of the Malays and Islam that he said was the foundation in Malaysia.

“To respect this country founded on ketuanan Melayu (Malay supremacy) and Islam, it’s not wrong if the PM and TPM posts are dikhususkan (reserved) for Malays (Islam). The other positions, share with the other races. This matter is usual and normal.

“Have the non-Malays not learned from Singapore. Has the position of senior minister (public service) been given to Malays even though Singapore was founded on Malay supremacy (Islam). Don’t be a hypocrite,” the professor at the National Defence University said.

In the same column, he criticised the Federation of Chinese Associations Malaysia (Hua Zong) for allegedly complaining about the small number of Chinese representatives in the Cabinet. The Cabinet currently has two representatives from the Chinese community, following the MCA and Gerakan’s decision to reject appointments to the Cabinet.

“My question is, where are we? Is there really such a need for Chinese ministers to take care of the Chinese? Has the Malay ministers not been taking care of the Chinese all this while? Who has to take care of whom? Who has to be grateful and repay the deeds?”

He then went on to say that he was worried with the single BN party idea, saying that Umno, which he described as the sole voice for the Malays and Islam, will only have one vote against the other 12 coalition members.

“Because of that, I am very worried with the idea of making BN a single party. We may be well-intentioned. What about the others? The danger is, when voting is conducted, surely

Umno (Malay) vote is only one compared to representatives of the 12 other component parties.

“Only Umno will talk about the interests of the Malays (Islam). That is also if all understand. There are some in Umno that have their Malay hearts dead because (they) have been blinded by the money that is digula-gulakan (given as sweets) by the ultra kiasu,” the Chinese-Muslim academic said.

BN leaders had recently been publicly weighing the idea to collapse all 13 component parties into a single party, with BN chairman and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak saying last Friday that Umno will set up a special lab to conduct a detailed study of the idea.

Najib, who is also the Umno president, reportedly said feedback will be gathered from the party grassroots and that any changes must be accepted by Umno members.

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