

Unlike Pak Lah, Khairy lets Utusan stay rabid on race
Malaysian Insider
Aug 25 , 2013
BY LEE SHI-IAN

Khairy Jamaluddin (pic) is not his father-in-law, at least when it comes to accepting that the government has a role to play in keeping a rabid Utusan Malaysia in check.

In a interview in a book on his years in office, Tun Abdullah Badawi pointed out how he warned the editor-in-chief of the Umno-owned daily that it had crossed the boundary with an editorial that smacked of racism and he should expect no favours from Putrajaya if charged with sedition.

But his son-in-law, the ambitious Youth and Sports Minister, took a different position when he was asked at a forum why Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak did not read the riot act to Utusan Malaysia for its incendiary headline: "Apa lagi Cina mahu" after the May 5 general election.

He said Najib's "Chinese tsunami" remark on Barisan Nasional's (BN) Election 2013 results was only an observation and he was not faulting any ethnic group.

"As far as the prime minister is concerned, he stated a fact that there was discernible swing among the Chinese voters against BN.

"He was making an observation and was not faulting any communities... (Utusan's) headline and the prime minister's position are completely different," the Malaysiakini news portal quoted Khairy as saying during the 7th Annual Malaysian Student Leaders Summit in Kuala Lumpur today.

The Umno Youth chief was responding to a student's question on why Najib failed to take Utusan Malaysia to task over the inflammatory headline.

"The prime minister is committed to the 1Malaysia approach until today. He could have gone back after the elections and say look, we did not get the Chinese support so let's forget about 1Malaysia and focus on people who supported us.

"But he has been consistent that we must stick to an inclusive policy platform," Khairy said.

He reiterated that Utusan's headline was wrong but it was not endorsed by the government.

In the book *Awakening: The Abdullah Badawi Years in Malaysia*, Abdullah makes a startling revelation about how he dealt with Utusan Malaysia, in stark contrast to how the strident newspaper is managed by its Umno backers now.

Referring to his appointees, Abdullah said, "I did not interfere with their work as I believed that they had a professional job to do and I allowed them the space to do it. But when they abused the openness by playing up racial and religious issues, like when Utusan Malaysia did, then I would call them and warn them."

As it turned out, the police did not come a-calling and the editor escaped any sanction.

But Abdullah said that phone call put the fear of God into the newspaperman and, after

that, there were no more offensive articles from the Umno-owned paper. - August 25, 2013.

Hakipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/chinese-tsunami-remark-was-merely-an-observation-by-pm-says-khairy>