

Chinese reps criticise Ali Rustam, blame Umno for losses in past 2 general elections

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The Barisan Nasional (BN) lost Chinese support in the 2008 and 2013 general elections because of racist remarks by some right-wing leaders in Umno, similar to what is happening now, said Chinese groups.

"In fact, these are the leaders who had angered and driven away many of our BN traditional supporters irrespective of ethnic background in the 12th and 13th general election," said MCA Publicity Bureau chairman Datuk Heng Seai Kie (pic).

Echoing her statement is the president of the Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) Datuk Lim Kook Cheong, who noted that previously Chinese voters had given very strong support to the BN in the 1995, 1999 and 2004 elections, resulting in major victories by its candidates.

They were responding to statements by former Malacca chief minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, who blamed the Chinese for his defeat in the May polls, and went a step further by later accusing the Chinese of allegedly being involved in illegal businesses.

"In the recent GE, many BN leaders had lost their seats, but none of them behaved like Ali. They did not blame any single race for their defeat," Heng said in a statement today.

She described the Umno vice-president candidate's statement on the Chinese dabbling in illegal businesses "completely baseless and disappointing", arguing that he was denying the contributions of the Chinese in nation-building and development.

"During the recent state visit by the President of China Xi Jinping to Malaysia, both our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Xi agreed that the Malaysian Chinese community had contributed to much of the country's achievements today, yet Ali Rustam has openly contradicted the PM," she said.

Lim, affronted by Mohd Ali's accusations, pointed out that the development in Malacca, particularly industrial growth, was largely due to Chinese investments.

"All members of ACCCIM's constituent chambers nationwide, and in fact all entrepreneurs in the Chinese community, have worked hard on their respective legitimate businesses, contributing significantly to national economy and revenues," he said.

Lim explained that the casino, 4D, Toto and a variety of recreational and entertainment businesses - all of which were the target of Mohd Ali's tirade against the Chinese - were legal activities as long as they are approved and licensed by the Federal Government.

"Furthermore, criminal activities are not committed by any single race alone. They are the dark side of society transcending all ethnic groups.

"It is understandable that since the Umno party elections are around the corner, many candidates will try to find ways to portray themselves as 'defenders' of the Malay race," Heng said.

"But it was totally unacceptable to make wild accusations simply for their political agenda.

"We are concerned that such invalid accusations and racial bigotry will similarly affect BN's performance at the ballot box in future," she added.

In accusing the Chinese of being involved in all "illegal businesses", Ali had said, "We can't have casinos, 4D, Toto, gambling, lottery, massage parlors, ah long. These are all illegal. And the Chinese are the ones dabbling with all the illegal businesses".

He had also said that although he worked tirelessly in the last general election, he was voted out by the Chinese.

He is one of six Umno members eyeing a vice-presidency in the upcoming Umno polls. - October 9, 2013.

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