

'Only selfish politician promote racial politics'

Free Malaysia Today

2 April 2014

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GEORGE TOWN: A race-based voting system will be a step backward and only selfish politicians will promote racial politics to serve their own interests, said Gerakan national legal and human rights bureau chairman Baljit Singh.

Baljit was commenting on Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Shahidan Kassim's proposal that voters should elect leaders from the same racial group.

He said the proposal went against the 1Malaysia spirit promoted by Prime Minister and Barisan Nasional chairman Najib Tun Razak.

"It's not going to help Malaysia progress. This is against nation-building and the premier's 1Malaysia concept to nurture all citizens as a single Malaysian race," Baljit told FMT.

"It's shocking that after 57 years of independence, there are ministers who still promote voting on racial lines," he said.

Shahidan, who has been criticised by Yayasan 1Malaysia Board of Trustees chairman Chandra Muzaffar and Serdang MP Ong Kian Ming, had defended his suggestion.

The minister had said the current election system was inherently racist as it allowed for the people to question the role of the king and Islam.

"Limiting voters' choice by allowing them to vote only those of the same racial background as themselves will end such instability once and for all," said Shahidan.

Baljit said the 1Malaysia concept was to work towards electing representatives regardless of race and religious backgrounds.

He said most people were no longer voting along racial lines but preferred to choose representatives who could implement good governance, combat corruption, eradicate poverty and close the gap between the rich and poor.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2014/04/02/only-selfish-politicians-promote-racial-politics/>