

Shafie's Warisan is nothing but a Mahathir proxy, says Kitingan
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STAR president Jeffrey Kitingan says Najib Razak's Umno and Mahathir Mohamad's PPBM are nothing more than the flip side of the same coin.

PETALING JAYA: Veteran Sabah politician Jeffrey Kitingan has warned Sabahans against trusting Parti Warisan Sabah, led by former UMNO strongman Mohd Shafie Apdal.

Kitingan accused Warisan of being nothing more than a proxy for Dr Mahathir Mohamad's new party PPBM.

"Warisan is nothing more than a proxy of Mahathir's UMNO Team B, under PBBM, and must be seen as carrying the 'Agenda Malaya' as its ultimate objective.

"Najib Razak's UMNO and Mahathir's PPBM are nothing more than the flip side of the same coin. If Najib wins, it will be a continuation of the past 54 years of exploitation of Sabah.

"If Mahathir's team with Warisan wins, it would be back to Mahathir's UMNO and Sabahans do not want that to happen," he said in a statement released today.

Kitingan, who is Parti Solidariti Tanah Airku (STAR) president, said that on the surface the political landscape in Sabah appears complicated, especially with the return of Mahathir and his supposed alliance with another ex-UMNO leader, Shafie.

Shafie was a federal minister but had joined former deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin in criticising Prime Minister Najib Razak over the 1MDB scandal and the RM2.6 billion deposited in Najib's personal bank accounts.

The duo were dropped from the cabinet by Najib in July 2015 and later forced out of UMNO.

Muhyiddin is the president of PPBM, which he co-founded with Mahathir and former Kedah menteri besar Mukhriz Mahathir, among others. Shafie did not join PPBM but chose to go his own way setting up the Sabah-based Warisan.

Kitingan accused Warisan of trying to disrupt a Sabah opposition pact called, United Sabah Alliance (USA), by enticing Parti Cinta Sabah (PCS) from the coalition.

"Simply put, it is all about 'Agenda Malaya' vs 'Agenda Borneo'," Kitingan said.

“Mahathir and other political parties wish to take over power from the current UMNO-BN regime, carry the ‘Agenda Malaya’ so that they can continue to lord over the Borneo States and exploit them as vassal states.

“On the other hand, local-based opposition parties, united under the USA or Gabungan Sabah, carry the ‘Agenda Borneo’ of defending their rights, autonomy, sovereignty and their right to self-determination.”

Kitingan’s STAR is one of the three founding parties in the USA pact, with the other two being Yong Teck Lee’s Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) and Parti Cinta Sabah, which is led by Wilfred Bumburing.

Two other parties later joined the pact, namely Parti Harapan Rakyat Sabah led by Lajim Ukin and Parti Perpaduan Rakyat Sabah (PPRS) led by Arshad Abdul Mualap.

However, last month PCS president Wilfred Bumburing said the party supreme council decided to leave the two-year-old coalition so that it can better facilitate a better working relationship with all Sabah opposition parties to achieve straight fights against the ruling government.

Kitingan believes PCS is a victim of Warisan’s political ploy and will have to face the consequences.

“PCS’ plan for a grand alliance will not work as this will compromise the ‘Sabah for Sabahans’ strategy and has so far received little interest either by Warisan, who wants to go it alone, nor by PKR-Pakatan Harapan,” he said.

Kitingan added that though all the Sabah-based parties wanted to change the UMNO-BN government but it must be a change for the better, not worse.

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