

06 OCT 1996
S46-Events
THE RISE AND FALL OF S46

By: Ali Mamat

KOTA BAHARU, Oct 6 (Bernama) -- Parti Melayu Semangat 46 occupied a place in Malaysian politics for eight colourful years, going through many ups and downs.

At the onset of its formation, the Umno splinter party's performance was most encouraging, especially in Malay-majority states.

However, the 1995 general election results showed that the party was not only further from achieving the objective of its struggles, but support from Malays who were once strongly backing the party was also eroding as an increasing number of S46 members returned to Umno.

Apart from that, S46's former allies began to distance themselves from the party, beginning with its partners in Gagasan Rakyat including the Democratic Action Party (DAP), Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) and Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM).

And the latest to leave the party led by former Finance Minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah were its partners in Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU) -- PAS, Berjasa and Hamim -- who had been in power in Kelantan since 1990.

Under such circumstances, Tengku Razaleigh was left with no choice in his pursuit of his struggle but to dissolve S46 and take his followers to Umno en bloc.

S46 held a special assembly today to obtain the mandate of at least two-thirds of its members before the party is dissolved.

Following is a summary in chronological order of S46's formation and events surrounding the party including its cooperation with opposition parties, break up with PAS and holding of the Malay Unity rally last Thursday which was attended by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

* 1987 -- At the Umno general assembly, Tengku Razaleigh failed in his bid to defeat Dr Mahathir for the party presidency. His supporters were dissatisfied with the defeat and took the matter to court on the ground that some delegates who voted were ineligible.

* 1988 -- The High Court declared that Umno was an unlawful organisation. The Registrar of Societies rejected an application by a group led by Tengku Razaleigh to set up Umno Malaysia, but approved the registration of Umno (Baru) submitted by supporters of Dr Mahathir.

The Tengku Razaleigh group finally succeeded in registering a new party called Parti Melayu Semangat 46. Tengku Razaleigh was appointed its president and Datuk Rais Yatim deputy president. Former Umno leaders who joined S46 included Datuk Manan Othman, Datuk Harun Idris and his son Mazlan, Tan Sri Osman Saat, Datuk Zakaria Abdul Rahman, Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad, Datuk Ibrahim Ali, Hajah Rahmah Othman and Puan Marina Yusof.

* 1989 -- S46 established two pacts -- APU, whose other members were PAS, Berjasa and Hamim, and Gagasan Rakyat, in which its partners were DAP, PBS, PRM dan the Indian Progressive Front (IPF).

The Registrar of Societies rejected the application to register APU as a coalition of parties.

* 1990 -- In the general election, APU made a clean sweep of all 39 state seats and 13 parliamentary seats in Kelantan.

However, S46 won only one parliamentary seat and two state seats in Terengganu and one state seat each in Pahang and Johor.

* 1991 -- Ibrahim who won the Pasir Mas parliamentary constituency on a S46 ticket led an exodus from S46 to Umno. Other leaders who followed suit

included Harun, Mazlan, Radzi, Rahmah and Marina.

* 1995 -- In the general election, APU was still able to perform well in Kelantan, winning 12 of the 14 parliamentary seats and 36 of the 43 state seats. However, DAP and PBS pulled out from Gagasan Rakyat and S46 candidates failed to win any seat in the other states.

* August 1995 -- A by-election for the Gua Musang parliamentary seat appeared to be the beginning of the decline in S46's influence when its candidates (Tengku Razaleigh himself) won on a reduced majority of 4,746 votes compared to 8,980 votes which he obtained in the April general election.

The by-election also witnessed cracks in the relationship between PAS and S46 with PAS hardly playing any role to help Tengku Razaleigh win.

* Jan 2, 1996 -- The soured ties between S46 and PAS became more evident when S46 members boycotted the swearing-in ceremony of Kota Baharu Municipal Council members due to dissatisfaction over the allocation of posts.

* Feb 7, 1996 -- S46 Information Chief Ahmad Shabery Chik said his party was prepared to participate in Umno's 50th anniversary celebrations in May 1996.

* Feb 10, 1996 -- Tengku Razaleigh said he would consider joining Umno if invited by Dr Mahathir.

* April 24, 1996 -- Kelantan PAS Chief and Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat announced a proposal by the state government to amend the state constitution to limit the Sultan's powers and prevent the palace from intervening in the state's administration. S46 immediately opposed the proposal.

* April 26, 1996 -- Dr Mahathir confirmed that he had met Tengku Razaleigh. Nik Aziz reacted by saying that if the meeting discussed Tengku Razaleigh's re-entry into Umno it meant that S46 had been buried.

* May 8, 1996 -- Dr Mahathir announced that Tengku Razaleigh would join Umno, as a result of a second meeting between them a few days earlier.

Tengku Razaleigh confirmed Dr Mahathir's statement and said a special general assembly of S46 would be held to obtain the consent of two-thirds of its members to the dissolution of the party before the members officially joined Umno en bloc.

* May 10, 1996 -- PAS deputy president Abdul Hadi Awang urged S46 to leave APU and relinquish all administrative posts held in the state government.

July 14, 1996 -- PAS supreme committee decided to sever all forms of ties with S46.

After this, all four S46 executive councillors in Kelantan were dropped, followed by S46 members appointed to the boards of various state government agencies, state and district committees, and districts councils.

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