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DAP considering new front

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The DAP is now looking into the possibility of forming a new front with former partners Parti Keadilan Nasional and Parti Rakyat Malaysia.

DAP chairman Lim Kit Siang said the party was also prepared to work with other political forces to "defend the Constitution and strengthen political and religious moderates in the country".

Lim said this in his speech to Malaysian students at the London School of Economics in London on Wednesday.

A copy of his speech was posted on the party's homepage.

He claimed that the Sept 11 attacks on the United States had given Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad two trump cards - to conduct an anti-terror election campaign and create fear over the Pas formation of an Islamic State.

"This was reinforced by Pas' call for jihad over the US air strikes against Afghanistan and the party's association with the overthrown Taliban regime," he said.

Lim claimed that Dr Mahathir would "exploit" these factors to the advantage of Umno and the Barisan Nasional, to the detriment of the Opposition.

"It is up to Keadilan, PRM and other political forces in the country to decide if they want to join the DAP to protect and promote a democratic, secular, multi-religious, tolerant and progressive Malaysia, with Islam as the official religion," said Lim.

Meanwhile, party secretary-general Kerk Kim Hock, when contacted today, said that there had been numerous suggestions from inside and outside the party for the DAP to form a new opposition front.

"This was especially so during the height of the Islamic State issue with Pas," he said, adding that there had also been proposals to rope in Parti Bersatu Sabah.

However, he said though the proposal was worth exploring, especially considering the challenges the opposition is expected to face in the next general election, there was no serious discussion on it.

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