

**Muhyiddin leads delegates to pledge support for Najib**  
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**by Hafiz Yatim**

Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin today made a pledge and offered his undivided support for party president Najib Abdul Razak and the latter's choice of election candidates.

During the winding-up session of the Umno general assembly, Muhyiddin stood up and raised his right hand to make the pledge, with 2,700 delegates and party leaders repeating the oath read by the deputy president.

"Let us stand together in the spirit of unity and solidarity, honesty and sincerity, confidence and determination in winning the solid support of the rakyat for the sake of our party's victory.

"We, the Umno people, pledge to close ranks, promote brotherhood, eliminate disputes, avoid jealousy and feeling of envy, and to place party interest above self-interest.

"We, the Umno people, pledge to be loyal to the party by giving our full trust and solid support to the president to lead us to a handsome victory in the next general election."

Muhyiddin also reiterated that Umno members should stop all acts of sabotage among themselves and see the selection of election candidates as something that has been decided by God.

"Don't create new problems. We already have enough problems to deal with in our preparation for the election," he said.

Later in his speech, Najib said the vow was an Islamic pledge of allegiance (bai'ah), and he thanked Muhyiddin for making the unexpected move.

As the general election looms, there is palpable fear of sabotage by those not picked by Najib to be candidates.

Najib, who is facing his first general election as prime minister, would be taking this opportunity to move his men into positions of power.

During a press conference later, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin said that the bai'ah was important to avoid any act of subversion within the party.

"It (sabotage) happened before and we don't want it to happen again," he said.

Meanwhile, Umno vice-president Ahmad Zahid Hami di said he was confident that Umno and BN could retake Selangor.

Ahmad Zahid claimed that an independent study sanctioned by PAS showed that under the prime ministership of Najib, support for Umno and the BN are growing in Selangor.

"A study sanctioned by PAS central found 76 percent of respondents are disappointed with Pakatan Rakyat and 60.6 percent found there is no change in the state," he said.

Ahmad Zahid Umno VP"The research also found that 56.1 percent of respondents felt DAP had eroded Malay rights and is chauvinistic. This is a PAS study, not Umno's," he said.

Ahmad Zahid (right) said another study showed Najib's popularity has increased from 48 percent in 2008 to an excess of 55 percent, compared with the 20 percent registered by de-facto PKR leader Anwar Ibrahim.

"Coming from Perak, I pledge that we will assist to win Selangor back from Pakatan Rakyat.

"Hence, we should be prepared to work hard in the coming election, not only to defend Putrajaya but to win back the states that we lost," he said.

'Work for comfortable victory'

Earlier vice-president Shafie Apdal, who was the first to speak, asked the party to work hard to ensure a comfortable victory.

"BN must win comfortably to ensure we can form a strong government. Without power, it will result in difficulty to administer and implement policies."

This, Shafie added, had happened in Europe and United States, which saw problems in budgets not being passed.

It is only with a strong government, he said, that the work on the various programmes for up to 2020 could be achieved.

He cited various programmes such as haj, Felda and Felcra, that had not only benefited Umno but also PAS members.

Vice-president Hishammuddin Hussein, in his turn, delved briefly into Umno's history and said the party was weak with conflicts and had come out stronger.

"We have to be consistent that whatever happens, we in Umno must be with the president and the party agenda," he said.

Hishammuddin (left) said Umno and the government had done a comprehensive transformation programme in intending to replace the Internal Security Act.

Despite this, Hishammuddin, who is also home minister, said a new law on anti-terrorism would be enacted to ensure public security.

He pointed out that as the 13th general election approached, Umno had to remain united to fight and register a bigger victory.

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