

Ex-PM decries DAP's anti-hopping law

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By Nigel Aw

The DAP's proposed anti-hopping law is against the opposition coalition's advocacy for liberalisation, said former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We are free... we say we want to liberalise, to be able to speak one's mind and criticise people and what not; that is our freedom.

"So what is it now in wanting to prevent people from party hopping?" he said.

Mahathir added that if the quality of candidates was such that they were not loyal to the party, they would naturally switch sides.

"If they are born in the frog year, then they will jump lah," he quipped at a press conference at his Hari Raya open house in Seri Kembangan this afternoon.

DAP led by Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng had on Aug 20 proposed the introduction of an anti-hopping law at the state legislative assembly.

Publicity stunt

However, the proposal had come under fire from MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek who described it as a publicity stunt as the opposition was well aware it would be against the federal constitution that guarantees the freedom of association.

DAP national chairperson Karpal Singh had concurred on the constitutional hurdle based on a previous Supreme Court ruling (now the Federal Court) but called for a review of the decision.

Both BN and Pakatan Rakyat have been plagued by party hopping, either through outright defection by its representatives or those who remained as independent but were partisan to the other side of the aisle.

PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim had apologised for the hopping - a trend that was most endemic in PKR - and pledged to better vet its candidates in the next general election.

Both Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and their families were present at Mahathir's open house.

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