

'Don't blame MIC for botched defection plan'
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TELUK INTAN With MIC's own allies pointing fingers at the party for a botched defection ceremony during BN's Teluk Intan by-election campaign on Tuesday, its Wanita chief Mohana Muniandy has called for a stop to the blame game.

"Suddenly, everybody is passing the ball to MIC, but we are the same family.

"I wouldn't want to blame anybody. I don't want to be irresponsible," Mohana (right), who was present at the event, told Malaysiakini when contacted today.

She was responding to a report by The Malaysian Insider that quoted Umno information chief Ahmad Maslan passing the buck to MIC for the botched event.

"The event was arranged by MIC and they will have all the relevant information. They know the real story," Ahmad is quoted as saying.

Mohana disputed this, saying the event was "definitely not organised by MIC" as the organiser was the NGO Pewaris, and she was merely invited to give a ceramah as the audience primarily comprised Indian women.

The event, which was presented to the media as a defection of some 150 DAP members to the BN, saw Ahmad symbolically putting BN T-shirts on some of them.

'MIC was only a guest'

However, it went awry after some confused members said they were duped to attend the event and insisted they were still ardent DAP supporters.

"I was only supposed to deliver a ceramah, but suddenly there was a gimmick, with them (the organiser) saying some DAP people were joining BN.

"I was not aware of this until it was announced and they were changing into BN T-shirts. As a party member, of course I was happy if there is support coming back to us," Mohana said.

However, Mohana added, she too was puzzled a commotion started after that, with some DAP members claiming they were duped.

Later, she said, she contacted the organiser for clarification.

"They said there was no problem with the ceremony, it was just some got scared at the last

minute," she added.

Yesterday, Yusof Abdul Manaf, the chairperson of a taxi drivers' association in Teluk Intan, who was involved in organising the event, accused Ahmad of hijacking the event.

Yusof also blamed MIC for the event, which he said was initially only intended for handing out goodies but later became a political cross-over ceremony.

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