

**Dr M confirms new party in the works**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
**Zikri Kamarulzaman and Kow Gah Chie**

Dr Mahathir Mohamad has confirmed there are talks to form a new party to be part of the Save Malaysia movement.

Asked if he would lead the party, the former prime minister replied: "I will be the first among equals... Not necessarily the president."

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with opposition members and former Umno leaders in Putrajaya, Mahathir said they have yet to decide whether the new party would be a Malay or multiracial one.

He added that the new party was necessary as existing opposition parties are "sometimes not attractive" to others.

Mahathir said his son Mukhriz and former Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin expressed support for the new party.

As for former Umno vice-president Shafie Apdal, Mahathir said he had attended the meeting to discuss the new party, and spoke a lot.

Asked if they would compete directly against Umno, Mahathir said they would not.

"If Umno wants to support us we accept, but we don't go directly against them.

"We want to change the government."

Mahathir also said that he would not compete in the next general election, but would play a role as a leader in this new party.

Earlier, Mahathir also announced that a new group or coalition would be formed to further the Save Malaysia movement's objectives.

However, the details are sketchy as to how the group will differ from opposition coalition Pakatan Harapan.

Mahathir said the opposition parties would come in to this "bigger group" as individual parties, and that it was up to Harapan whether it wanted to maintain its coalition.

The meeting held at the Perdana Leadership Foundation was attended by leaders of Pakatan Harapan and former Umno leaders.

Opposition Leader Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail was not seen at the meeting, which started at 4pm.

### **Positive development**

Among those present were DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang, Amanah deputy president Salahuddin Ayub and PKR vice-president Tian Chua.

Also seen were former MCA president Dr Ling Liong Sik, former Kedah menteri besar Sanusi Junid, veteran newsman A Kadir Jasin, former Umno minister Zaid Ibrahim, Bersih chairperson Maria Chin Abdullah and National Human Rights Society (Hakam) president Ambiga Sreenevasan.

PKR vice-president Shamsul Iskandar Md Akin said the Save Malaysia movement has entered a new phase now that a new party is in the pipeline.

"This is a positive development," he said when commenting on the Citizens' Declaration meeting called by Mahathir.

"Various issues have been discussed, including cheating in the general election. (Former Umno minister) Shafie Apdal's voting area has been shifted to an island, off the coast of Semporna," he said.

"We discussed how to go down to the ground to get in touch with the people to strengthen (the Save Malaysia movement). We also debated about the formation of the new party," Shamsul Iskandar, the Bukit Katil MP, said.

He added that despite the debate, none of the parties raised the issues of who should become the new opposition leader and new prime minister if they were to rule the country.

Meanwhile, Tian Chua clarified that Wan Azizah was not present because this was a Citizens' Declaration meeting.

Wan Azizah had declined to be part of the Citizen's Declaration in the wake of Mahathir's attack on her husband and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim

Anwar had penned letters to warn all PKR leaders to be cautious of working with Mahathir.

Meanwhile, Amanah is supporting the move to form a new party, said its communications director Khalid Samad.

"We will accept it and welcome it. But we will decide later how we are going (to work with the new party)," Khalid said when met after the meeting.

Copyright © 1999-2016 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/348565>