

To approve or not to approve Dr M's party, next move belongs to ROS
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Muhyiddin Yassin is slated to submit an application to the Registrar of Societies (ROS) to seek its approval for the establishment of a new political party.

The former deputy premier will helm the new party as its president while former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad would serve as chairperson.

The party is expected to be Malay-based in composition, and touted as a substitute to the present Umno led by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, which Mahathir claims is beyond redemption.

It is learnt that those behind the new party are also prepared for the possibility of ROS rejecting the application.

Should this happen, Mahathir's camp would claim Najib is rattled by the prospect of their entry into the political arena.

On the other hand, a fuss-free approval from ROS would signal the prime minister's confidence in facing his former mentor-turned-nemesis on the battlefield of ballots.

A source familiar with the new party told *Malaysiakini* there is a "Plan B" if the application is rejected.

"We will then look into using an existing platform, a party already registered with the ROS," he said, but declined to elaborate.

However, Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak did not foresee any obstacles if the application meets the stipulated requirements.

"If everything is in order, there is no reason not to register new political party.

"Personally, I welcome political competition. It's healthy for our democratic system," he told *Malaysiakini*.

Echoing a similar stand, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said a swift approval would be given if the conditions are met.

“As home minister, the ROS is under my responsibility.

“If a new party wants to be set up and all the requirements are met, InsyaAllah the approval would be hastened,” he was quoted as saying by news reports during a dinner last night.

Previously, BN strategic communications director Abdul Rahman Dahlan also welcomed the new party, but pointed out that it would weaken the opposition further.

“It’s a healthy democratic process. As far as BN is concerned, we are ready for any eventualities,” he had said.

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