

'Those loyal to Umno kiss my hand, those against Umno, spurn it'

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Zikri Kamarulzaman

Umno president Najib Abdul Razak today told a tale of two handshakes, one of loyalty and one of animosity.

The first handshake, he said, happened when he arrived at today's Kota Tinggi Umno division assembly in Johor.

"A Wanita delegate held my hand, and kissed it not once, but twice," he said to cheers from the over 1,000 delegates present.

"I'm sure my wife won't be jealous, because this is a manifestation from your hearts, that all of you not only support me personally, but also as the president, and are loyal to Umno," he added.

In contrast, he said a handshake he offered to end party infighting was spurned at last year's Umno annual general assembly.

"I stretched my hand in peace and unity, but unfortunately my handshake was not accepted.

"Thus it led to the incident where former leaders chose a different path... This path is against what Umno stands for," he said.

This was a reference to the incident last year when Najib offered to make peace with his then Umno deputy, Muhyiddin Yassin.

Muhyiddin did return the handshake at the assembly, but has since gone on to form a new movement, Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) with Najib's nemesis, Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The party aims to fight against the Najib-led BN government in the next general election.

The Umno president, however, believes this new entity will not be able to defend the Malays, due to its partnership with DAP.

Meanwhile, Johor Menteri Besar Khaled Nordin, who was also present at the meeting, quashed speculation that the state Umno would be divided due to support for his predecessor, Muhyiddin.

"Even though Muhyiddin is a great leader in Johor and has made many contributions, he has chosen a different path.

"We in Johor respect his decision, but our duty towards Umno must continue, and must be

stepped up.

“We are loyal to the party president, we are loyal to Umno,” Khaled said.

He is expected to launch the Umno assembly in Muhyiddin’s former division of Pagoh next week, a move that would further cement Johor Umno’s loyalty to Najib as its president.

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