

Muhyiddin goes from being PM's right-hand man to obscure MP

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Once deputy prime minister and right hand man to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, Muhyiddin Yassin is set to be relegated to an obscure corner when Parliament reconvenes on Monday.

Just two budget sessions ago, Muhyiddin was seated on the front row on the government's side, directly to the right of Najib, a position befitting for the number two most senior government leader at that time.

When Parliament convened in October last year, that position was instead occupied by Bagan Datoh MP Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who had replaced Muhyiddin as deputy prime minister.

A dramatic falling out between Muhyiddin and Najib saw the former being removed from the government.

Without a position in government, Muhyiddin, who is Pagoh MP, had to sit together with the other BN backbenchers, occupying the seat facing the back of the sergeant-at-arms, or bentara.

Muhyiddin occupied the seat of Johor Bharu MP and BN backbencher chief Sharir Samad, who was moved one row back.

Beside him was Keningau MP Joseph Pairin Kitingan, leader of Parti Bersatu Sabah.

However, the political landscape had undergone more drastic changes in the last year as Muhyiddin went from the senior member amongst the BN backbenchers to an opposition leader.

Muhyiddin, who continued to be vocal about Najib's handling of 1MDB, was on June 24 sacked from Umno, leaving him without a party.

On Sept 8, Muhyiddin became the leader of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia after the registrar of societies approved the party.

However, Parliament has yet to recognise the recently registered party as it will recognise Muhyiddin as an Independent MP when Parliament convenes on Monday for the Budget 2017 session.

He will be placed at the back of the House, just beside Bandar Tun Razak MP Khalid Ibrahim, who is also an Independent after being sacked from PKR.

The seat Muhyiddin will be taking had been vacant since the beginning of the Parliament

session after the 13th general election.

Shafie suffers a similar fate

To Muhyiddin's left will be Semporna MP Shafie Apdal, who had suffered a similar fate to the former deputy prime minister.

Once seated at the front row of the government's side, the former rural and regional development minister was also last year relegated to sit together with other BN backbenchers.

This was after he was removed from the government for criticising Najib's involvement in 1MDB.

Shafie was on June 24 suspended from Umno, prompting him to quit the party.

He is in the midst of setting up a Sabah-based party but will for now be considered as an Independent MP, taking his place beside Muhyiddin at the far end of the House.

His seat, too, had been vacant since Parliament began after the 13th general election.

Interestingly, Penampang MP Darell Leiking's placing in the House will remain unchanged.

This is despite Leiking quitting PKR to join forces with Shafie.

Parliament now recognises Leiking as an Independent MP but he will still be seated on the second row of the opposition site, just behind Gelang Patah MP Lim Kit Siang.

The placing of MPs is correct as of Oct 16 based on the seating plan provided on the Parliament website.