

Kit Siang recalls Hussein Onn's 'biggest mistake in life'

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad's latest vitriol has prompted Lim Kit Siang to recall former Umno president and prime minister Hussein Onn's confession regarding his "biggest mistake in life".

This judgement error, which altered the fate of the nation, according to the DAP veteran, was to place Mahathir on the path to power.

"The third prime minister Hussein Onn told me after his retirement in the eighties that his biggest mistake in life was making Mahathir Umno deputy president in 1976," he said in a statement today.

Although Lim said this allowed Mahathir to become prime minister twice from 1981-2003 and 2018-2022, it must be noted that his second tenure in office was due to the support of Pakatan Harapan.

Meanwhile, Lim said Hussein's "mistake" in picking Mahathir over Ghafar Baba, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and Ghazali Shafie after six weeks of indecision was highlighted again when Mahathir alleged that promoting a multiracial Malaysia

ran foul of the Federal Constitution and that DAP was a danger to the Malays and Islam.

Commenting on the former premier's claim that DAP, with 40 MPs, is holding Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to ransom to turn Malaysia into a secular nation, he said: "Mahathir cannot be more wrong."

"Did DAP, which had 42 MPs after the 2018 general election – more MPs than now – hold Mahathir as prime minister of the 22-month Harapan government to ransom to do away with Islam as the official religion?"

"When Mahathir spoke at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018 and promised to ratify international covenants, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Icerd), DAP knew nothing about the proposed Icerd ratification although DAP was subsequently the target of demonisation for being anti-Malay, anti-Islam and anti-royalty," he added.

Understand Constitution

Lim also criticised Mahathir for appearing to be ignorant of the Constitution despite being prime minister twice for close to a quarter of a century.

“I ask Mahathir to read Article 3 of the Constitution, where there is no reference to any official religion.

“Article 3(1) states: ‘Islam is the religion of the Federation but other religions may be practised in peace and harmony in any part of the Federation.’

“There is no provision for any official religion in the Constitution. But the understanding and tolerance of the non-Muslims in Malaysia to Islam is such that Malaysians, whether Buddhists, Hindus, Christians, Sikhists or Taoists, have no objection to Islam becoming the official religion. The same applies to DAP,” he added.

Lim said he failed to understand how Mahathir arrived at the conclusion that it is against the Constitution to promote a multi-racial nation.

“Is Mahathir saying that his Vision 2020 and its nine strategic challenges were unconstitutional?

“The first three prime ministers of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Razak Hussein and Hussein Onn were multi-racialists.

“Look at Article 43(2)(a) of the Constitution which does not dictate the racial identity of who can be prime minister but states that it must be one who

commands the majority support of the MPs who themselves must be voted in by their respective constituents,” he added.

Lim said while there is no animosity among the races and religions in Malaysia, there are those who want to create divisions with lies, falsehood, fake news and hate speech in the impending six state polls.

“It is an added tragedy that such a personality includes someone who was twice prime minister and who established a world record in losing his deposit in a parliamentary election,” he added.

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