

Quit now or face dire consequences
Malaysiakini.com
Apr 12, 2008
Andrew Ong

Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised his hand picked successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to step down now before Umno loses support further or worse - face a no-confidence vote in Parliament. MCPX

While stressing that he was not suggesting Barisan Nasional MPs to go for a vote of no-confidence against Abdullah, Mahathir said that such a prospect is possible.

mahathir hulu langat 120408 speech "If he doesn't want to step down as he was asked to, then maybe there would be a vote of non-confidence. If this happens, it will be very bad for him as he is rejected by his party.

"But it can be done although I don't think Barisan MPs would do it. If the opposition does it, they have 82. If they can get 35 or 36 more from Barisan, Pak Lah has to vacate his post," said Mahathir.

He was speaking to reporters after his keynote speech at a general election 'post-mortem' organised by Umno Hulu Langat division in Kajang today which was attended by some 600 people.

Mahathir said Abdullah cannot wait until the Umno elections in December to step down as the rebuilding of the party and plans to recapture five Pakatan Rakyat-held states need to start immediately.

"If there is no succession now, we might not have enough time to draw voters back to our fold, especially if the (Pakatan Rakyat) governments perform well, it would be very difficult," he said.

umno 2007 asembly pak lah with raised hand 071107 "Should Abdullah step down, there is a better possibility of Umno healing itself," he added.

'For his own good'

To a question, Mahathir said that should Abdullah step down, the party would have to follow tradition and allow the deputy to take over.

"If that doesn't happen, the constitution has to be changed or there has to be a re-election. This depends on the party members," he said.

The former premier also said that stepping down now would be for Abdullah's "own good" as it would avoid him being attacked during the Umno general assembly which would also coincide with party polls.

On Abdullah's admission that he was "partly responsible" for Barisan's disastrous outing in the polls, Mahathir stressed that his predecessor should not blame others.

"He admitted that he is partly responsible. But he blamed me, Tengku Razaleigh (Hamzah)

and internal sabotage as well. The question is why there was sabotage.

"The last four prime ministers were never sabotaged by Umno, nor MCA, MIC or Gerakan. Why did they sabotage? Because they disagreed with (Abdullah's) leadership. This he has to accept," he pointed out. anwar lingam tape pc 081107 extrovert

To a question, Mahathir said the general election results do not reflect PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's popularity. On the contrary, he said Anwar was not at all popular.

"He didn't get this huge majority that you mentioned. People didn't like him. It's because people were unhappy with Barisan and Umno. (The polls) were not a test of the opposition. It's not because (Anwar) is popular.

"In 1999, (even) with the black eye and all, he only won five seats. He had to suffer a black eye for five seats. In 2004, he had only one. He is not popular," he insisted.

Anwar Ibrahim's political ban expires on April 15. There has been strong rumours that he would make a bid for Parliament soon and encourage defections from Barisan MPs to form the next federal government.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news//81291>