

**Karpal, Anwar 'big fans' of Pak Lah**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Apr 12, 2008**  
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Dr Mahathir Mohamad has accused opposition leaders Karpal Singh and Anwar Ibrahim of being "supporters" of current Premier Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's leadership. MCPX

The former prime minister said both Karpal and Anwar were taking advantage of the situation to preserve Abdullah's 'weak' administration to benefit the opposition in the long term.

mahathir hulu langat 120408 speech "They both know that the longer the prime minister stays on, more Umno members would vote the opposition," Mahathir told his audience at the Hulu Langat Umno general election 'post-mortem' discussions.

"I didn't know Karpal was a big support of Abdullah... now he doesn't want me to speak up on Abdullah's flaws," he said in reference to his ongoing spat with the DAP chairperson.

On Anwar, Mahathir said he had cemented his 'support' for Abdullah by declaring that the opposition would not push for a motion of no-confidence against the premier.

"Why doesn't he want to see Abdullah fall? This is because he knows that it's the prime minister's administration that cause the people to vote for the opposition," he said.

Mahathir said that traditional Barisan Nasional voters had voted for the opposition not out of support, but as a means to send a message to Barisan's top leaders.

"They don't love the opposition. In fact, they love Umno and Barisan. With the current Umno leadership, the party would crumble. They are trying to wake the leaders up, but to no avail," he added.

During his 50-minute speech, Mahathir also pointed out that Abdullah is the first serving prime minister who comes from a state that is controlled by the opposition - Penang.

Below are excerpts from his speech and the Q&A session that followed:

### **On how Abdullah should listen to the grassroots**

He should go down to the ground and ask our supporters: "What is wrong with me? I'm trying to improve. If you don't like my son-in-law, then I'll find a new one".

### **On university students being barred from politics**

mahathir hulu langat 120408 crowd We are always finding excuses. We always blame others. On the other hand we must understand that students can take action. Look at the number of students who campaigned for the opposition. [...]

I don't think the law is that strict and that it would restrict our efforts to ensure our welfare [...] If we love our bangsa, we must take risks. Don't always look for excuses. However, I

am of the opinion that the time has come to review this law (University and University Colleges Act).

### **On Abdullah cracking down on Umno members who 'sabotaged' the party**

If he wants to take action, take lah. Let's see how many people would be left in the party.

### **On the possibility of Barisan Nasional MPs motioning for a no-confidence vote against Abdullah**

I don't think they are brave enough to push for a no-confidence vote.

### **On the possibility of opposition parties motioning for a no-confidence vote against Abdullah**

mahathir hulu langat 120408 press conference Anwar said he won't do it because he is afraid. He knows Abdullah is useful for the opposition. If Abdullah is no longer around, there would be no more protest votes and he (Anwar) would lose (in the upcoming elections).

### **On whether he regrets appointing Abdullah as his successor**

At this point of time, I regret. When I appointed him. He was 'Mr Clean'. He bathes 15 times a day. At the time I didn't know that he would do all these things [...] I didn't know that when I 'hand over', it became his. Umno now belongs to him and his family.

He didn't tell me that he would have a 'second cabinet' which comprises of Khairy Jamaluddin, Reezal Merican, Kamal Abdullah... he didn't tell me. I could have made them ministers. He did this only after he took over. By then, it's hard for me to cancel the appointment.

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