

Dr Mahathir : Muhyiddin can beat Najib for No 2
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Should Muhyiddin Yassin challenge Umno deputy president Najib Abdul Razak, the senior vice-president can win the contest, said former party president Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.
MCPX

mahathir kimma new office event 150708 05"People perceive Najib as a weak leader who has never had his own stand. He merely has been repeating 'I support, I support... I'm very touched'," said Mahathir when opening the office of the Malaysian Indian Muslim Congress (Kimmma) in Sentul, Kuala Lumpur.

In another broadside, the former Umno strongman ticked off Najib for failing to project the "people's vision".

"People are generally disenchanted with Najib. So it is possible that (Prime Minister) Abdullah (Ahmad Badawi) may not be able to manipulate the general assembly to grant a victory to Najib."

Abdullah and Najib have been endorsed by Umno leaders in nine states so far, to defend their No 1 and No 2 Umno posts respectively.

muhyiddin yassin and najib and umno"If he (Najib) competes for deputy president, he would have to compete against Muhyiddin. And it is quite possible that Muhyiddin will win and Najib will lose," said Mahathir.

He said that by tradition, only the deputy president can become the deputy premier. Should Muhyiddin win the party's No 2 post, he will be appointed DPM.

"Therefore, when the time comes for the PM to divest his interest in the government, Najib will not be in a position to receive this award."

umno party post polls quotaMahathir who had once supported Najib to succeed Abdullah, now appears to be backing Muhyiddin.

It is still not clear whether Muhyiddin will be game enough to challenge Najib.

Muhyiddin was left in the cold after Abdullah announced last week that he would hand over power to Najib in two years.

'Manipulation' anticipated

The succession plan also leaves Muhyiddin with the uphill task of garnering 38 nominations for the deputy presidency.

Even if he qualifies for the contest, he could still be subjected to foul play and manipulation during the poll, according to Mahathir.

umno special briefing abdullah ahmad badawi announce resignation date 100708 05"I

believe that Abdullah (right) will manipulate by giving money, kain pelikat and other things, to ensure that the delegates elect those whom he has chosen.

"There is a possibility in that way, with manipulation tactics, Najib may win. If he wins, he can become deputy prime minister and prime minister-in-waiting."

Asked to comment on the re-sale of Italian motorcycle maker MV Agusta, Mahathir reiterated his stand that the management of national car-maker Proton had made a questionable decision in the first place.

Proton had sold MV Agusta to an "unknown company" in Europe for 1 euro, which the former premier said "did not make sense".

mahathir kimma new office event 150708 03 "If we look at both divisions of the company - Husqvarna and Augusta Gevi - we have lost (nearly) 200 million euro or almost RM800 million," he said.

In 2006, Proton sold debt-ridden MV Agusta to little-known Italian company GEVI Spa. It then sold a subsidiary of MV Agusta - Husqvarna - to German company BMW for 90 million euro (RM450 million).

The rest of the company is to be sold to American motorcycle manufacturer Harley Davidson for 70 million euro (RM350 million). The deal is expected to be finalised in the coming weeks.

Excerpts from the press conference:

On allegations that Anwar Ibrahim has RM3 billion in assets

What we know is that he has never had problems with money. He can go here and there, have meetings, campaign... never short of money. We wonder where this money comes from. We are curious. Maybe there are also contributions from America.

On possible discussions between Umno and PAS

They can have a muzakarah (dialogue). It's okay to talk. But (both parties) have different objectives. I don't know how they can agree with each other.

But if we look at PAS, sometimes they are willing to forgo their principles in order to garner support. For example, they cooperate with DAP which rejects PAS' version of an Islamic state.

On the failed opposition motion of no-confidence against the prime minister

BN knew that the opposition wouldn't succeed. They don't have the numbers. Even so, they were not brave enough to allow the opposition to carry the (motion). The opposition would lose and BN would win. Even then, they (were) still scared.