

**Dr M: It's like cross breeding cat and kambing
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A merger between arch-rivals Umno and PAS would be like 'cross-breeding a cat and kambing (goat)'. This was former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's take on the much talked about issue. MCPX

Mahathir, who led Umno for 22 years, also described the ongoing talks between the two ideologically distinct parties as nothing short of 'strange'.

Quizzed on the speculations about the merger at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today, the 82-year-old statesman had journalists and those present in stitches with his sarcasm-loaded responses.

mahathir pc 260608 05Elaborating on the 'cross breeding' between two different species, Mahathir, who is a medical doctor by training, noted: "It is a bit difficult."

"We know cross-breeding is a science but it is a difficult science. We have not been able to clone them yet.

"I would like to see how PAS gives up its hudud laws and how Umno embraces hudud laws," he added.

Mahathir also said his successor, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wanted a two-third majority and this would be realised if PAS joined the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition.

"PAS on the other hand is not feeling happy being the smallest party in the opposition (alliance Pakatan Rakyat)," he said, adding that the Islamic party is a little 'confused'.

"One day they say they want (to talk with Umno). Next day, No. Next day, (they set) conditions. One leader says something. I think they should clear these cobwebs and come up with a stance whether they want to work together or not."

Don't forget your partners

Mahathir also called on Umno to heed the opinion of its BN partners and cited Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first prime minister, as an example.

"Umno must not forget its partners MCA, MIC and Gerakan. Although they are only a shadow of their former selves, they must not be forgotten.

"Because, Tunku Abdul Rahman said, even if there were only three (component party) members, he would still stand by them."

In view of this, Mahathir said any negotiations must involve the other parties as well and Umno was being 'quite devious' by holding talks with PAS without consulting its partners.

umno pas 180708"When you have partners, You cannot neglect your partners because Umno cannot rule this country with only PAS as its partner. It needs all the other parties as well," he

said.

The former BN chairperson also pointed out that Umno's move would disappoint the Sabah and Sarawak-based component parties.

"The other parties feel they need better treatment than PAS, if there are any goodies or sweets that were given to PAS, they wouldn't like it," he said.

Umno and PAS started holding discussions soon after the March 8 polls, which saw five states falling under opposition control and BN being denied two-third majority in Parliament.

It has also been reported that Umno had offered its rival to form a joint government in Selangor. A similar offer was later extended in Perak.

Both these states are under the control of Pakatan Rakyat.

PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz, who had previously opposed the talks with Umno, said yesterday his party would propose the implementation of the strict hudud and qisas laws - which allows for amputation of limbs and stoning to death - should the PAS-Umno merger become a reality.

He earlier also suggested that Umno and PAS should be dissolved and a new party based on Islam be formed to unite the Malays.

However, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang today ruled out the possibility of political cooperation between the two parties.

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