

**Mahathir makes surprise entry...**

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad made a surprise entry on the last day of the Umno general assembly after having declared yesterday that he would snub the meeting following the election of Khairy Jamaluddin as the new Umno Youth chief.

At 12.30pm, he walked into the hall as newly-elected deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin was making his closing remarks.

Immediately, Muhyiddin acknowledged Mahathir's presence and welcomed him as the former Umno president was ushered to the VIP seats.

Najib Abdul Razak's wife, Rosmah Mansor, was seen greeting Mahathir, who was accompanied by Dr Siti Hasmah, and the three sat in the observers' gallery.

The two speakers after Muhyiddin, Najib and outgoing premier Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, also welcomed Mahathir and wife to the assembly.

It was a grand entry to the man who had left the party last year and decided to snub the Umno meeting two days ago when he failed to turn up for the opening speeches.

He wrote in his blog yesterday that he did not attend the meeting because Umno Youth had elected a politician who is 'known to be corrupt', referring to Abdullah's son-in-law Khairy.

mahathir pak lah reunion at umno agm 2009 280309Mahathir's youngest son Mukhriz was defeated by Khairy for the coveted post of Youth chief.

"I felt that my image would be tarnished if I am in the company of those who endorse corruption," he wrote.

It appeared that Mahathir has changed his mind 24 hours later.

At the end of the assembly, Mahathir walked up on stage accompanied by Najib where he was welcomed by top leaders, who take turns to kiss his hand.

There was an uncomfortable half-hug between Mahathir and his successor-turned-nemesis Abdullah, before the two leaders hold hands and raised them together along with Najib's.

### **Return with conditions**

In an immediate reaction after the assembly ended, Mahathir revealed that he was prepared to return to Umno, most possibly because of Abdullah's retirement as Umno president today.

The 83-year-old former premier resigned from Umno last May after a bitter falling out with his annointed successor.

However, Mahathir had set some "conditions" before making his decision, but did not elaborate on them.

"I will rejoin Umno only with the conditions that I have set. (Only then), I will rejoin," he said, adding that he would join "at an appropriate time".

His presence at the assembly today has sent some shock waves through Umno, with talks of him returning and play a key role in the party which he had led for 22 years.

In response to a question whether he would be asked to be an 'adviser' to the government, Mahathir said 'no' but added that he would be more than happy to give his views.

He also described the Umno Youth elections as not "very satisfying" because so much money was used by the victors.

najib mahathir pak lah umno 2009 agm final day 280309 10Meanwhile, Mukhriz said his father came to the assembly because he had "promised to do so".

Mahathir, Mukhriz explained, had also stated his intention to rejoin Umno once "Najib takes over power" from Abdullah.

As the assembly was about to end, Mahathir was invited to the stage where he was greeted by Abdullah and Najib. He then held up the hands of the two leaders in a public display of solidarity.

The Umno assembly enters its fifth and last day today with the winding-up speeches by party leaders taking centre stage.

### **Pak Lah's final speech**

The assembly held at the Putra World Trade Centre resumed at 8.30 this morning with a debate on a motion on education and religion before the newly-elected chiefs of the three wings start the winding-up speeches.

najib mahathir pak lah umno 2009 agm final day 280309 12Puteri chief Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin took the rostrum first followed by Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Wanita chief Shahrizat Abdul Jalil.

The three newly elected vice-presidents - Shafie Apdal, Hishammuddin Hussein and Ahmad Zahid Hamidi - then gave their speeches.

They were followed by deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin and newly elected president Najib Abdul Razak. Abdullah then gave his final closing remarks to Umno.