

| | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Newspaper | NEW STRAITS TIMES |
| Date | 05 DECEMBER 2016 |

Dr M shares stage with DAP leaders

NST-5/12/2016

CONVENTION:

Ex-premier given prominent position among former critics

MELISSA DARLYNE CHOW
SHAH ALAM
darylne@nst.com.my

TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was once DAP's biggest critic, had tongues wagging when he not only turned up at the party's 50th national convention, but also shared the stage with DAP leaders yesterday.

The Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) chairman was ushered into the hall at a convention centre here and was given a prominent seat among opposition party leaders on stage, among them Lim Kit Siang and party secretary-general Lim Guan Eng.

Dr Mahathir appeared to be in high spirits, and was also standing when DAP's party anthem was played. He stood out among the DAP leaders, donning red as opposed to DAP's white.

Other Pakatan Harapan leaders present were PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and Parti Amanah Negara president Mohamad Sabu. Also making an appearance were Bersih 2.0 chairman Maria Chin Abdullah and former minister Datuk Zaid Ibrahim.

In commenting on his first appearance at a DAP convention, Dr Mahathir sang praises of the opposition, and took veiled swipes at MCA.

"This is the first time I am attending a DAP convention. Previously, I attended MCA's annual general meetings.

"The difference is, the party anthem of the so-called Chinese party, DAP, is sung in the national language. MCA does not sing theirs in the national language.

"Also, the two speeches (by acting chairman Tan Kok Wai and Guan



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (second from left) at the **DAP's 50th national convention in Shah Alam** yesterday. With him is **Lim Kit Siang** (left). Pic by Muhammad Sulaiman

Eng), were delivered in the national language. This is not done in MCA."

Stating that the Malaysian spirit in DAP was stronger, Dr Mahathir said the presence of different races showed that DAP was not a Chinese party, but a multiracial one.

"The non-Chinese also hold high positions in the party, such as the late Karpal Singh," he said, adding that he had been wrong about DAP.

Dr Mahathir commended Guan Eng for his "good speech", stating that the latter had affirmed the Federal Constitution, tenets such as preserving the rights of Malays and Bumiputeras, defending and upholding the system of constitutional monarchy and safeguarding the position of Islam as the official religion.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had once claimed that if Umno wins, a Malay will become the prime minister, and that if the opposition wins, Lim Kit Siang will be prime minister.

"DAP has never asked to be prime minister. You see how the prime minister uses racist sentiments to win the hearts of Malays?" he asked.

Dr Mahathir said Najib's attempts to portray the nation's political struggle as one merely between Um-

no and DAP were wrong, noting that both had their coalitions of Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Harapan.

He also said that his party would soon join Pakatan Harapan, but did not give a date.

On the issue surrounding former DAP man "Superman" Hew Kuan Yau's video telling Sarawakians to let the "Malays screw Malays", Kit Siang agreed that Hew had been crude, vulgar and wrong.

He, however, questioned whether it was right or necessary for Najib to show that video at the Umno general assembly.

"I do not think such crude vulgarity by Hew is because he has a racist outlook, as he would not hesitate to use crude and vulgar language to express himself.

"It is wrong, but is it necessary for the prime minister to racialise crude expressions?"

"Furthermore, is Najib aware that Hew is not a DAP member as he had resigned, knowing that the DAP leadership disagreed with this?"

The clip featured a part of a speech Hew made in the run-up to the Sarawak election in May, showing him urging voters in Batu Kitang to vote for DAP's Malay candidate Abdul Aziz Isa so that the latter could "screw Malays".