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# Dr M forms opposition pact

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**COMPETITION: BN**  
leaders welcome  
challenge

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**Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad** at a press conference announcing the new pact in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are Bukit Katil member of parliament **Shamsul Iskandar Mohd Akin** (seated, left) and Pokok Sena member of parliament **Datuk Mahfuz Omar** (seated, right). Pic by Mohd Fadli Hamzah

**A** NEW opposition bloc is on the horizon, with its component members DAP, PKR, Parti Amanah Negara (PAN) and a soon-to-be formed party expecting to take on Barisan Nasional (BN) in the next general election.

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the new party and pact would be formed as soon as possible.

However, Dr Mahathir said he would not hold the president's post or run in the election and merely planned to offer his assistance to strengthen the opposition bloc and new party.

Asked if former Umno deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir would be part of the bloc, he said they were supportive of the agenda and goals of the movement.

As for Pas, Dr Mahathir said he was not aware of its stand on the new pact, but the party's deputy president, Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man, had called for a truce among opposition parties.

"So, we will not attack Pas and they will not attack us," he said.

However, no indication was given as to whether Pas would be part of the coalition.

Dr Mahathir said this after a three-hour meeting at Perdana Leadership Foundation to announce the new opposition pact.

He said it would be open to op-

position party members and individuals.

Present were former Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang, Bukit Katil PKR member of parliament Shamsul Iskandar Md Akin, Pokok Sena member of parliament Datuk Mahfuz Omar, former Umno member Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan and activist Hishamuddin Rais.

Umno information chief Tan Sri Annuar Musa said the formation of the opposition bloc was nothing new.

He said it would not gain traction from the people and would go nowhere.

"(It is) just a failed PR (Pakatan Rakyat), which became PH (Pakatan Harapan) a few months ago, and has now become 'PAKATUN'.

"They are welcome to contest in the next general election. Let us celebrate Malaysia's parliamentary democracy.

"The so-called new pact is clear proof of Dr Mahathir's continuous struggle for revenge against (Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak) and to defend his son Mukhriz," he said.

BN strategic communications director Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan said Dr Mahathir's move did not come as a surprise.

"Maybe because he has been attacking BN for many years now, or maybe because the faces we saw today (yesterday) at Dr Mahathir's press conference in Putrajaya were largely made up of those who are widely known to have a personal tiff with the current leadership," he said in a statement.

The minister in the Prime Minister's Department said the proposed pact/party was part of a healthy democratic process and, as far as BN was concerned, it was

ready for any eventualities.

"In fact, we believe the new pact will only weaken the opposition further and strengthen the chances of BN winning big in the next general election," he said.

He said the proposed pact had no common agenda for Malaysia.

"What they have is a dangerous liaison based on their acute frustrations and failure to capture the imagination of the rakyat."

He said BN intended to checkmate the proposed pact every step of the way.

"Seriously, there is no fun nor pleasure gained in fighting a nonagenarian.

"But, since the gloves are off, BN will face anyone, anytime, anywhere for the future of this beloved country.

"I wish them well and good luck," he said.

Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak said many new parties and new pacts had been formed over the last 65 years.

"Some have survived till today, while many more have disappeared along the way. A party, or even a coalition, is merely a vehicle or a means to an end," he said on his blog.