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# Just how far can Dr M go?

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**WOBBLY:** Despite his passion, support for the former premier is diminishing



On a blazing hot Sunday afternoon, about 300 people gathered at a restaurant in the quaint town of Kuala Kangsar, to listen to what would be 30 minutes of sheer vilification.

Here, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad took to the stage to lambast his predecessor, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his leadership.

With him were his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, his "frenemy" DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang, and a few other opposition leaders and disgruntled former Umno members.

And again, at this so-called col-



loquium, all this group of people had to say was about the now-settled crisis with state investment arm, Malaysia Development Bhd.

Just a day before his arrival at Kuala Kangsar, Dr Mahathir campaigned for the opposition in Sungai Besar, Selangor, lending his support to Parti Amanah Negara (PAN) — of all people.

He went as far as describing PAN candidate for the Kuala Kangsar by-election Dr Ahmad Termizi Ramli as "our" candidate.

Probably this is just part of his larger plan to topple Najib, and while he admits that the by-election won't change the government, he thinks this was the chance to show the people that they were against the democratically elected

Federal Government.

Dr Mahathir also took the time to point the crosshairs at Pas president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang for aligning his good self with Najib.

In both of the opposition-organised events, several key figures known to be his "strong allies" since his Dr Mahathir-Lim Kit Siang declaration days, were however, nowhere to be seen.

Big guns from PKR were absent, and even more surprising were the absence of his son and former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir and former deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

It is a fact that most PKR leaders are not for the declaration, although both Dr Mahathir and the party have a common aim.

But it would be hard for PKR's top leaders to forget one key element: It was Dr Mahathir who first incarcerated de facto PKR leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for sodomy.

This is especially so for Anwar's wife and party president, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and her daughter, Nurul Izzah Anwar, who is also PKR vice-president.

Memories from 1998 and beyond continue to mar their minds.

In a press conference yesterday, Nurul Izzah insisted that it was Dr Mahathir who had been lending support to Pakatan Harapan's campaigns, vehemently denying that the loose opposition pact was dependent on his support.

"The issue is (that) no one can forget. It is important to understand that Najib is the son of the environment that was created by the system created by Dr Mahathir," she was quoted as saying.

Muhyiddin and Mukhriz, who were both dragged into this political mess created by the nonagenarian would, by now, know better than to partake in this political suicide.

I would like to think that the both of them know that their political career — although already wobbly — will but only crumble, if they continue to side with the former premier.

Even with the lack of support from these figures, it doesn't look like Dr Mahathir was going to slow down any time soon.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday told the former Umno president off, saying that the latter should "stop speaking" before he was accused of being senile.

This one-liner advice was one that Zahid wanted Dr Mahathir to take seriously.

"He should stop talking or people will think he is senile. That is all I want to say," said Zahid.

Dr Mahathir, with his unprecedented support for the opposition, may well be regarded as the man of the hour for the opposition, or at least for a fraction of them.

But while his passion and vigour is admired by many, when will he begin to realise that the best option is to take the backseat and just enjoy the ride?

Just how far can the 90-year-old go to realise his turpitude dream of removing a leader he himself had picked, especially when support for him is slowly diminishing?



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad