

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	23 JANUARY 2017

14th GENERAL ELECTION

Dr M: PPBM prepared for fights with Pas, BN

NST- 23/1/2017

KUALA LUMPUR: In the strongest yet indication of his electoral plans, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that his party will take on Pas in the next election.

Dr Mahathir, in an interview with Singapore's *The Sunday Times*, said the opposition would enter three-cornered fights with Barisan Nasional and Pas.

"We are prepared for a three-cornered fight. We have to take on Pas. We think that, in most instances, we can actually beat Pas and BN as well.

"But if they are strong, the effect (result) will be split (votes), they (Pas) will not win, BN will win. That is why I said, if you are not supporting us, you're supporting BN," the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) chairman was quoted as saying.

Dr Mahathir's comments came amid talks between Pas and PPBM over seat allocations in Malay-majority areas for the 14th General Election. On Saturday night, he had, in a speech in Ampang, said the time was up for negotiations to include Pas in the opposition electoral pact.

When contacted yesterday, Pas election director Datuk Mustafa Ali said it appeared that PPBM was being run by "two captains", with party president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin working on requests for seats from Pas, and Dr Mahathir remaining adamant with his "autocratic ways".

"It seems that there are two captains running PPBM. *Satu kapten tua, satu kapten muda.* (One old captain, one young captain.) But Dr Mahathir is being himself. He wants things to go his way. His autocratic style remains and he has never changed. I feel that he is angry at something. Perhaps, that's why he said the time was up for Pas to join any electoral pact."

Pas Ulama Council information

chief Datuk Dr Mohd Khairuddin Aman Razali said reality differed starkly with what was the former prime minister stated.

"The reality is, most PKR elected representatives were dependent on Pas's election machinery in the previous general election. At the same time, PPBM needs Pas for negotiations on seat allocations.

"Obviously, the strength of support for Pas is more than half of what the opposition enjoys."

Pas research director Dr Mohd Zuhdi Marzuki said Dr Mahathir's statement was part of his political strategy to quell Pas's influence.

He said Dr Mahathir was a "political dictator" who went against most prime ministers as well as his deputy prime ministers in the past.

He said after successfully "overshadowing" Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, "domesticating" DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang and "crippling" Parti Amanah Negara (PAN) president Mohamad Sabu", the only factor that could affect Dr Mahathir's expansion of power was Pas.

"He even went against the Malay rulers. Today, Dr Mahathir is part of the opposition bloc. Coupled with his political dictatorship, he wants all parties and leaders to bow under his political movement. He has now successfully placed himself as the leader of PPBM, PKR, DAP and PAN.

"Pas is the biggest political party after Umno. Pas is also consistent in upholding syariah law and Malay rights, something not in Dr Mahathir's political strategy."

In **Kuantan**, Pas information chief Nasrudin Hassan said Dr Mahathir's target is not to defeat Umno, but Pas.

"It is unfortunate that the new opposition pact failed to resolve seat issues among themselves."