

DR M: SHAFIE IS PM CANDIDATE

NST-28/6/2020 pg.9

'Unanimous decision was made at meeting of Pakatan Harapan Plus leaders'

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FORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has endorsed Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal as Pakatan Harapan Plus' prime ministerial candidate.

"I believe, if this comes true, it will strengthen the relationship between the peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak," he said in a video posted on his social media account yesterday.

His announcement came amid infighting in the pact over its prime ministerial candidate.

PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had insisted that he be the candidate and Dr Mahathir, too, offered himself for the prime minister post.

Dr Mahathir's endorsement of Shafie would mean that he was no longer in the running to be the next prime minister.

He said the decision to choose Shafie was made at an informal meeting on Thursday at Rumah Tetamu Sabah here.

Besides him, the meeting was attended by Shafie, who is Parti Warisan Sabah president, Parti



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal

Amanah Negara president Mohamad Sabu, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, DAP organising secretary Anthony Loke, DAP national vice-chairman M. Kula Segaran and DAP strategist Liew Chin Tong, as well as disputed Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia deputy president Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir and secretary-general Datuk Marzuki Yahya.

"In the meeting, I was open to any suggestion, including not nominating myself as the next prime minister.

"Among the suggestions proposed was for Shafie to be the prime minister (candidate). We agreed on Shafie's nomination unanimously.

"I fully support this proposal. What is important is for us to have a firm stand so that the public knows about our position."

Dr Mahathir said Anwar was

nominated to be the deputy prime minister 1, while Mukhriz would be deputy prime minister 2.

On why Shafie was nominated, Dr Mahathir, who is Langkawi member of parliament, said it was due to the former's struggles since 2015, when he was booted from the then Barisan Nasional government's cabinet, led by former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"Perhaps many have forgotten that Shafie was one of the original leaders who spoke against the kleptocratic government before the 14th General Election.

"He was one of the leaders who became a victim of the Najib-led government. He was sacked from his ministerial post and as Umno vice-president because he could not accept the practice of accepting bribery and the stealing of the people's money through the IMDB scandal that is revolting.

"Shafie used to be with (Prime Minister Tan Sri) Muhyiddin (Yassin). But Muhyiddin has now left the struggle and has gone back to his kleptocratic friends who punished and dismissed him."

In February, several lawmakers, including Muhyiddin, left Pakatan Harapan, causing the collapse of the PH-led federal government, leading to a week of political turmoil in the country amid the Covid-19 outbreak.

Muhyiddin was appointed prime minister on March 1.

Since then, Dr Mahathir has been critical of the loose Perikatan Nasional government.

Last month, the 94-year-old submitted a motion vote of no confidence against Muhyiddin.

On the motion, Dr Mahathir said he would proceed with the tabling in the Dewan Rakyat session next month.

The lower house of Parliament is scheduled to begin its 25-day second meeting, with the sitting kicking off on July 13.

"Parliament will convene soon. I will bring up the motion of no confidence against the Muhyiddin-led government.

"God-willing, with the support of MPs who can't accept Muhyiddin's backdoor government and want to return the people's mandate, they will join me and my friends to support the motion for Shafie to be the prime minister.

"If this effort is successful, we will fulfil the democratic aspirations of the people.

"We must end this government that was not chosen by the people"