

# 'Dr M will take aggressive approach to challenge termination'

MSJ-30/5/2020 Pg. 7

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is likely to take a more "aggressive" manoeuvre as he leads the charge to challenge the termination of his membership and four others in Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu).

Political analyst Associate Professor Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi of Universiti Malaya said this was based on the former prime minister's previous political move when he was in Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN).

"Based on the history of his past political movements, Dr Mahathir is expected to become more aggressive in order to put pressure on his political foes and detractors.

"This is when Dr Mahathir will show his worth and political clout.

"At the other end of the spectrum, (Bersatu president) Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin is now forced to ensure that his party is free from any internal bickering before going against challenges

within and outside of the Perikatan Nasional (PN) political pact (for a general election)," he told the *New Straits Times*.

Awang Azman said the removal of Dr Mahathir (Langkawi member of parliament) and four others from Bersatu did not come as a surprise, although it was unclear when the termination would take place as the country is battling the Covid-19 outbreak.

The other four leaders removed from the party are former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir (Jerlun), Simpang Renggam member of parliament Dr Maszlee Malik, Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman (Muar) and Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah (Kubang Pasu).

"The removal of the five leaders

from the party is the right political strategy ahead of the Bersatu party election since Mukhriz is vying for the president's post, while Dr Mahathir won the post of party chairman uncontested," he said.

Awang Azman does not discount the possibility that the Bersatu leadership might have to resort to legal recourse in facing Dr Mahathir and his supporters, who will likely challenge their recent termination from the party.

Another political analyst, Professor Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, said the termination of the five Bersatu leaders is heating up the nation's political scene, with the possibility of a no-confidence motion to be tabled against Muhyiddin at the next Parliament sitting scheduled in July.



Associate Professor Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi

Commenting on the recent clash between factions aligned with Muhyiddin and Dr Mahathir, Azizuddin said this would not have an impact on the PN federal administration, since the government still commanded a slim majority in Parliament.

The termination of the five MPs from Bersatu, he said, was due to the so-called "Crossing The Floor".

"Under the Westminster System and parliamentary democracy, once you decide to sit in the opposition bench, it will be considered as you defecting from your party in the government. This is applied in the United Kingdom Parliament and the same goes for Malaysia.

"Dr Mahathir and the others can bring this issue to court to reclaim their position. However, it will be very difficult for Dr Mahathir to win."

He said that as the legal process took place, Dr Mahathir could seek a platform to campaign

against the PN government.

"What is the platform? Only time will tell. Perhaps the best platform for Dr Mahathir and the four MPs is for them to become members of the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition, but not members of the component parties in the opposition pact."

In the event of more MPs exiting Bersatu, Azizuddin said Dr Mahathir could seek an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and present the statutory declarations.

"If the king decides not to meet Dr Mahathir or make another process like what we saw in February, the motion for a vote of no confidence will be carried out in July's parliamentary session.

Similarly, he said, Muhyiddin could also seek an audience with the king.

"So, this is getting messier. If this crisis prolongs, the best way is to give back the mandate to the people for a new general election."