

# MUHYIDDIN: I AM NOT A TRAITOR

Bersatu president refutes Najib's allegations that his party betrayed Umno in Sabah polls

KUALA LUMPUR

**T**AN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has denied allegations that Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) betrayed Umno in the Sabah election, thus thwarting Muafakat Nasional's (MN) progress.

The remarks came on the heels of former Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak's accusation that Bersatu, through Perikatan Nasional (PN), fielded candidates to fight Barisan Nasional (BN) in 17 state assembly seats in the Sabah polls last year.

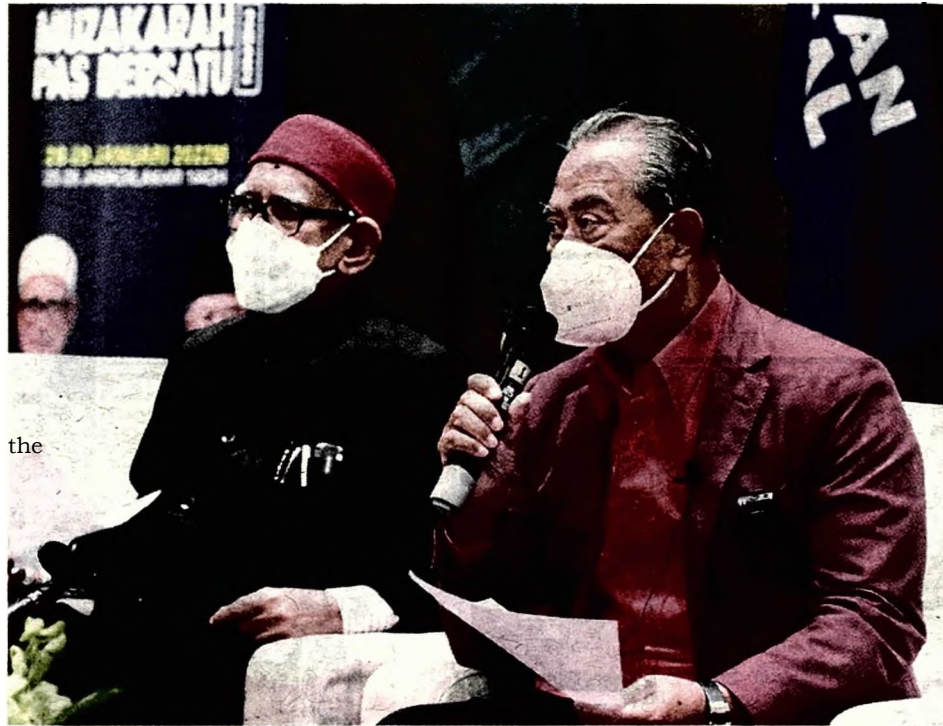
Muhyiddin, who is also Bersatu president, questioned the allegations as during the Sabah polls, there were no seat clashes between Bersatu and Umno.

He claimed that the seat-sharing committee between PN, BN and Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS), failed to reach an agreement when BN increased the number of seats it wanted to contest, causing clashes with PN in several seats.

Muhyiddin said the seats that saw clashes between PN and BN did not involve Bersatu and Umno, instead it was between Parti Solidariti Tanah Airku (STAR), PBS and BN.

"PBS also fielded candidates in seats contested by STAR, causing clashes between PBS and PN.

"Seeing this situation, I went to



Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (right) speaking after the 'muzakarah' with Pas in Shah Alam on Saturday. With him is Pas president Tan Sri Abdul Hadi Awang. PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

Kota Kinabalu before the nomination day to hold last-minute talks to prevent clashes between PN, BN and PBS.

"Unfortunately, this meeting failed to reach a consensus as each (party) insisted on fielding candidates in seats contested by other partner parties.

"Bersatu was the only party that did not field candidates in seats contested by its partners in PN, BN and PBS, while Pas took the honourable step of not contesting any seat," he said in a Facebook posting.

Apart from accusing Bersatu of betraying Umno, Najib, in a Facebook post last Sunday, also claimed that PN fielded independent candidates in six state seats contested by BN in the Sabah polls to split the votes.

The Pekan member of parliament also claimed that BN sacrificed many seats to Bersatu as part of the negotiations to be given the chief minister's post if BN won, but the opposite happened when Bersatu instead got the post.

Explaining the matter, Muhyiddin said he had asked Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to nominate an Umno candidate for the Sabah chief minister's post, but the latter did not do so until the Sabah election campaign ended.

In such a situation, he nominated Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor as the Sabah chief ministerial candidate in the event PN garnered the largest number of seats among the parties that made up the Gabungan Rakyat Sabah

coalition (GRS).

Muhyiddin said after PN garnered the most number of seats — 17 seats compared with BN's 14 — PN nominated Hajiji as chief minister, which was later agreed to by other GRS assemblymen, including from Umno.

"Am I a traitor? I am not a traitor. I told Umno to nominate a candidate. If Umno did not have a candidate, I had a candidate who wanted to be nominated. I am transparent and honest (in dealing) with Umno.

"Najib should not distort the facts. What happened in the Sabah state election was not the reason MN failed."

Muhyiddin also reminded Najib not to raise the issue of MN because Bersatu had decided not to join MN, while Umno had also

decided not to cooperate with Bersatu in the latter's general assembly.

He described the ending of cooperation between Bersatu and Umno as a blessing to his party because Bersatu was not plagued by moral problems that affected Umno leaders.

"I am ashamed to be associated with a party that still hails a man as a boss who has been found guilty by a court of a serious criminal offence."

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin said Pas's loyalty to PN should not be questioned as the party had been with Bersatu in the coalition since the very beginning.

"Pas is one of PN's founding parties and it has been with the coalition ever since. So do not dispute or question its loyalty and steadfastness with PN.

"We have just concluded our muzakarah (meeting with Pas) and we have put forward the resolutions and commitments of all parties in PN."

Muhyiddin said this in response to a recent question raised by some Pas leaders on whether the party should stick with PN or MN.

Elaborating, he said Pas had also taken a clear stance for the Johor election, including for all PN component parties to contest under the PN banner.

"For Johor (polls), it has been decided that we all will contest under PN's ticket. We will not mention Pas or Gerakan. We know who our opponents are. That's it. No more issues among us."

The Pagoh MP said the seat distribution among Bersatu, Pas and Gerakan for the Johor polls would be finalised this weekend.