

# 'Wife says okay, so I am staying'

## Bersatu president U-turns on previous decision, insists not a gimmick

**SHAH ALAM:** In a swift about-turn, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has agreed to defend his post as Bersatu president in the next party polls after getting the blessings of his wife. He also denied that his announcement a day earlier not to defend his post at the polls due next year was a gimmick to fish for votes.

The Bersatu founder and president said this in his closing speech at the party's 6th annual general meeting yesterday after delegates had approved a motion to reject his earlier decision.

Muhyiddin said although he had made the announcement not to defend his post, after much thought, he had not much choice but to stay on as the "voices calling for me to stay on are too loud to ignore".

The former prime minister proposed to stay on as a party adviser, but this was shouted down by the delegates in the hall at the Ideal Convention Centre (IDCC) here.

Muhyiddin said as his wife, Puan Sri Norainee Abdul Rahman, had been supportive all the while in his 50 years of active politics, he needed her blessings to continue for another term.

"My wife texted me, 'Stay another term, they need you.' I replied, 'I know, so?' and she said, 'Carry on.'



**Better together:** Members of Bersatu posing for a group photo after the annual general meeting at the IDCC in Shah Alam. - AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

"I then agreed to stay on for the last term, to which she replied, 'This is for the nation. Abah must stay on,'" he said to supportive

shouts from the delegates present on the last day of the AGM.

Later, he told reporters that it was not right to accuse him of seek-

ing attention to fish for support.

"Did you see the others crying? Ask the others around you if this was a gimmick. I was not playing.

"If you had heard me when I made the announcement (not to defend my post at the next party polls), you know that this was not child's play. This was put in writing in my policy speech, do you understand?" said Muhyiddin.

Earlier, Bersatu permanent chairman Datuk Suhaimi Abdullah, who chaired the AGM, said the delegates had agreed to approve the motion to reject Muhyiddin's proposal not to defend his post in the next party polls.

"The delegates decided this with the reason that the party is still in need of Muhyiddin's leadership," he said.

In their closing speeches, Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin had urged the president to stay on, while deputy president Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu said that although the party was still in need of Muhyiddin's leadership, the members also had to work hard.

Bersatu vice-president Datuk Seri Ronald Kiandee said there was unwavering support from the delegates for Muhyiddin to stay on as president for the next term.

"Muhyiddin's speech affected the delegates, so they all had to make changes to their speeches. They urged him to cancel his decision and this affected his intention (to stay on)," said the Beluran MP.