

## **Umno veterans join DAP, threaten to expose corruption**

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**By Melissa Chi**

SHAH ALAM, Jan 8 — Two Umno veterans joined DAP today, citing widespread corruption as the key reason for leaving the ruling party.

Former Pulau Manis assemblyman Datuk Mohd Ariff Sabri Abdul Aziz told reporters at the DAP conference here that he aimed to raise awareness on the need for a corruption-free society and “expose all the shenanigans” that are going on under Umno.

“Umno is running a giant pyramid scheme where every level there is corruption, the people still being taken in.

“Even now, if you see at every level of business decision made, there’s always the suspicion that it’s just an excuse to siphon public money to treat it as their own,” he said at a press conference with Aspan Alias, a Negri Sembilan Umno veteran.

The Malaysian Insider had reported last month that DAP was courting Umno stalwarts in a bid to reverse eroding support from the Malay community after repeatedly being accused of being anti-Malay by the ruling party.

DAP Youth chief Anthony Loke had confirmed that Mohd Ariff, who blogs under the pseudonym Sakmongkol AK47, and Aspan were among those approached.

“The real reason why I have to leave Umno and join DAP is because of the corruption which is beyond comprehension that is happening within Umno and the Barisan Nasional (BN) government,” Aspan said today.

“We have been very patient, we prayed and we really hoped that that issue would be corrected but apparently they can’t just do it,” he said, adding that “saying the right thing is forbidden” in Umno.

“There is no crime in joining DAP. Taking government money in hundreds of millions for the family and cronies, that is a betrayal.

“My move to join DAP is to throw away these traitors, that’s all,” he added.

Mohd Ariff, who was formerly information chief in Pekan Umno under Datuk Seri Najib Razak, added that Umno is no longer fighting for a cause, but for personal enrichment.

He stressed that there are no pre-conditions to his joining DAP, such as promises of seats to contest.

DAP has tried to reach out to Malays by recruiting the community’s leaders, such as Transparency International Malaysia founder Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim, who is now the party’s vice chairman.

Zairil Khir Johari, son of Umno’s former education minister Tan Sri Khir Johari, was recruited as secretary general Lim Guan Eng’s political secretary early this year in what was widely

seen as a move to burnish the mainly-Chinese DAP's multiracial credentials.

The Malaysian Insider reported in October that a survey commissioned by DAP showed Malay support in Penang, where it leads the state government, has dipped to 30 per cent, down from nearly 50 per cent just a few months after Lim took office as chief minister in 2008.

Umno has repeatedly accused PR, especially DAP, of being anti-Malay.

At its recent general assembly, several delegates and leaders including deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the opposition was anti-Malay, anti-Islam, agents of Christianisation and disrespectful to Malay rulers.

Umno's newspaper Utusan Malaysia also claimed earlier this year that DAP had conspired with the some church leaders to turn Malaysia into a Christian state.

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