

**DPM: Umno could have ruled on its own before independence**  
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**By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal**

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 1 — Umno was strong enough to have formed the government on its own before the country's independence, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

The Umno deputy president said his party could have succeeded in doing so, but stressed that it had "willingly" agreed to work with other races to achieve a "shared" goal.

"Umno is most definitely not racist. We could have built a government on our own, but we decided to share," Muhyiddin (picture) said in reply to questions from reporters here, adding that during the first elections Umno won the majority of the votes.

"People, some media do not realise that there are some parties out there who are a hundred times more racist than us," said the deputy prime minister.

Muhyiddin echoed party president Datuk Seri Najib Razak's remarks, who said today that Umno was not racist and that it was responsible for Malaysia's "social stability."

The prime minister said the Malay party had willingly co-operated with component Barisan Nasional parties MCA and MIC for a "bigger purpose" back in the 1950s to form a government and gain independence.

Najib has repeatedly pleaded with Umno delegates to adopt a more moderate approach, but his pleas appear to have gone unheeded.

Party conservatives have already been roused over the past two days by speeches demonising Pakatan Rakyat as anti-Malay, anti-Islam, "agents of Christianisation", "bapok" (transvestites), "bangsat" (bastards) and "pondan" (effeminate).

Umno goes into what is likely to be its last general assembly before a general election expected early next year.

Najib is said to need a marked improvement from the last polls to retain his position and only a return of Barisan Nasional's (BN) customary two-thirds majority of Parliament can guarantee he remains in office.

BN ceded 82 federal seats and five state governments to the opposition in the landmark March 2008 general election.

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