

**DAP membership not due to seat availability, say Aspan, Ariff**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**April 1, 2012**  
**By Mohd Farhan Darwis**

SUBANG JAYA, April 1 — Former Umno members Datuk Mohd Ariff Sabri Abdul Aziz and Aspan Alias said they joined DAP because they were frustrated with Umno's leadership, adding that the party, which Umno has labelled as "chauvinistic" and "anti-Malay", practised national unity.

They also refuted claims by Umno blogs that they joined DAP because other Pakatan Rakyat (PR) party components, such as PAS and PKR, did not have any vacant seats.

"We joined DAP because we felt they practise "national unity", rather than racial and religious politics. In fact, their entry forms do not even require us to mention our racial background.

"Our joining DAP has nothing to do with seats, or wanting to fight over the Malay seats in DAP. This is just speculation by Umno. Umno always practises slanderous politics; it is the biggest "slander factory"," Aspan Alias said during the "Why I joined DAP" session organised by Rokatini and DAP Subang Jaya here.

Aspan added that the 41 years he had spent in Umno were a complete waste of time.

"Umno is different now. They are the enemies of the Malays and have no respect for the state's legislative body.

"Umno is dead, and is merely hiding in the body of the old Umno," he said.

He added that Umno was ruined the moment former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad took the country's reins.

"(Dr) Mahathir began practising cronyism because he didn't understand politics. Previous leaders were aristocrats who did not pocket people's money. Instead, they focused on developing the country.

"But when an ordinary man becomes a leader, he begins to accumulate wealth," he said.

Umno cannot live without bribery, and bribery cannot flourish without Umno. — Datuk Ariff Sabri

Meanwhile, former Pekan Umno information chief Datuk Ariff Sabri said he joined DAP's ranks because the party says it fights for democracy, economic equality and an end to graft.

"It took me a long time to finally decide to join DAP. I was disappointed with Umno's leadership cronyism. It is very different from DAP, which fights for economic equality, democracy and the end of bribery.

"Umno is not fighting for the Malays. It is fighting for a select group of Malays."

Ariff, who served as Pulau Manis assemblyman for one term, added that he joined DAP because corruption is running unchecked in Umno.

"Bribery is very close to Umno's heart. Umno cannot live without bribery, and bribery cannot flourish without Umno," he said.

Zairil Khir Johari, who is the son of one of Umno's former leaders, said he joined DAP because the party is transparent and does not practise cronyism.

He also added that he hated the racial and religious games masterminded by Umno.

"Umno is diseased and can no longer be cured. The party uses racial and religious sentiments to frighten the people."

"Umno has accused DAP of being communists, chauvinists and anti-Malay when in fact, DAP is founded on justice and equality," said Zairil, who is also political secretary to Lim Guan Eng.

Zairil also slammed Umno for accusing DAP of converting Muslims into Christians.

"Umno accused DAP of Christianising Muslims, when in fact less than 10 per cent of its members are Christians. Where is the logic in its accusation?" he said, stressing that Umno's claim was unfounded.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/dap-membership-not-due-to-seat-availability-say-aspan-ariff/>