

I Remain Loyal to UMNO – Dr Mahathir
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reiterated his stand that his loyalty to UMNO and Barisan Nasional has never shaken.

The former prime minister said if it was true that he wanted to destroy UMNO, he had a lot of opportunities to do so during his 22 years of leading the party and nation.

"I had many opportunities to do that but during the time of my leadership, UMNO was not destroyed.

"I could have stepped down when the country was going through the financial crisis in 1998 and during the issue of (Datuk Seri) Anwar Ibrahim, but I did not.

"I only stepped down in 2002 after the problems were resolved and the country had recovered from the financial crisis. And now I am accused of wanting to destroy UMNO," he said during a dialogue with him organised by Badlishah UMNO branch (Kedah) head, Anuar Abdul Hamid, here, today.

Also present were former UMNO secretary-general Tan Sri Sanusi Junid and members of Kedah UMNO including from Pendang, Merbok, Kubang Pasu and Baling.

On party president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's policy speech at the opening of the UMNO General Assembly 2015 today in which he said the task of the deputy president was to assist the president, Dr Mahathir opined that the meaning of "assist" in the UMNO constitution was not merely to support but also to advise and remind the president if there were issues in administrative matters.

Dr Mahathir also said that UMNO members should be strong in their stand and not to easily fall for offers and inducements from any quarters if they wished UMNO to remain relevant.

"We have to safeguard the power and carry out the responsibilities entrusted to us by the people," he said.

On UMNO's willingness to forge tahalul siyasi or political cooperation with PAS, Dr Mahathir said it had been UMNO's aim for a long time.

"Originally, PAS leaders were UMNO ulama but if we want to forge cooperation with PAS, it

must be ensured that both share the same struggles and goals," he said.

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