

At UMNO's anniversary, PM slams 'treacherous' former leader

Free Malaysia Today

May 11, 2017

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He says this is unlike a former Umno president who labelled DAP as a racist chauvinist party against the Malays but is now 'kissing his former enemy' to serve his personal agenda.

KUALA LUMPUR: While UMNO leaders are joyful at the party's 71st anniversary tonight, a former leader's "unexpected" betrayal serves as a lesson for the party, said UMNO president Najib Razak.

Speaking to over 80,000 Umno members gathered inside the Bukit Jalil National Stadium here, the sixth prime minister said he never expected one or two former leaders of this country, "including a statesman we once respected", to betray the party they had served for decades.

Especially not after all the challenges UMNO and Barisan Nasional (BN) had faced to make the country the success that it is now, Najib said.

"(The former statesman) is willing to conspire to betray us, to take us down, and to declare war on UMNO and BN.

"He is now willing to hold hands and kiss his former enemy just to serve his personal agenda.

"But we will not forget who had all this while taught us that DAP is a racist party. We will not forget who had led us for tens of years and had instilled hatred towards DAP, labelling it a racist chauvinist party that is against Islam and the Malays.

"This is why PAS considers DAP as the enemy of Islam, and UMNO sees DAP as the enemy of the Malays."

Najib did not name the former statesman, but his use of the term "led us for tens of years" ruled out all but former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who led UMNO for over 22 years.

The prime minister said this is the reason he was thankful to his predecessor, Abdullah Badawi, whom Najib referred to as Pak Lah.

"Pak Lah remains loyal to UMNO and BN. Thank you, Pak Lah, for showing an example of how a former president should show loyalty to a party he once led."

Mahathir left the party last year shortly after his son Mukhriz was forced to quit his post as Kedah Menteri Besar. The father-and-son team, together with former deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin, then went on to form PPBM, which became Pakatan Harapan's fourth component party in March.

Since joining the opposition coalition, the 91-year-old has admitted in various forums and ceramah around the country that he had made a mistake in saying that DAP was a Chinese chauvinist party.

According to Mahathir, it was just part of the normal political games which had also seen him labelled by his former enemies as a dictator, among other things.

Najib, speaking further, said UMNO is anything but a racist or extremist party, adding that was the reason why it had invited those from non-Malay-based BN components to its anniversary.

"Hence, let us not allow our land to fall into (the hands) of the country's enemies and traitors.

"No retreat, no surrender!" Najib said in a rallying cry to UMNO members at the stadium.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/05/11/pm-praises-pak-lah-for-remaining-true-to-umno/>