

Mahathir praises Muhyiddin for 'great sacrifice' while in power
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PPBM chairman warns that if Muhyiddin is removed, the party will break up because many members support him, and efforts to win in GE14 will end in failure.

PETALING JAYA: Dr Mahathir Mohamad has praised PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin's "great sacrifice" in compromising his previous stellar career in politics and government by questioning Prime Minister Najib Razak over alleged improprieties.

The PPBM chairman hit out at criticism by certain members against Muhyiddin, saying they only served to split the party to help Najib, who is Umno president, lead BN to victory in the coming general election (GE14).

"Muhyiddin was holding the position of deputy prime minister because he was Umno deputy president.

"If Najib stepped down due to any reason, Muhyiddin would be the prime minister," Mahathir wrote in his blog today.

He said Muhyiddin and former Umno minister Shafie Apdal allowed themselves to be expelled from the party and the government in 2015, calling it a "very great sacrifice".

Mahathir, who was prime minister from 1981 to 2003, added that Muhyiddin did not remain quiet after that but instead helped to form opposition party PPBM.

"He accepted my proposal that I become the party's chairman, a position that is seen to be higher than his own."

He said Muhyiddin had done a lot of work to ensure PPBM's success, more than those who had proposed his removal.

"If today he is removed, the party will break up because many members support him. So the effort to win GE14 will end in failure."

On May 20, Perak PPBM chief registrar Azrul Suhadi Ahmad Mokhtar demanded Muhyiddin's resignation after the majority of 24 divisions in the state had reportedly held him responsible for the party's problems at the federal and state levels.

In early April, some 500 Rembau PPBM members quit the party, claiming they had lost confidence in the leadership of Muhyiddin and deputy president Mukhriz Mahathir.

Following this, supreme council member Kamarulazman Habibur Rahman also resigned, claiming that PPBM's direction had been hijacked by former Umno members looking solely for power and position.

Mahathir said he believed that those who had called on Muhyiddin to leave or be expelled wanted PPBM's effort to defeat BN in GE14 to fail.

"At the same time, they want to see me fail and Najib to be successful.

"Those who claim to support me are actually my enemies who are championing Najib."

He said if they continued in their ways, he would agree to have them removed from the party.

"Najib's supporters have no place in PPBM."

Mahathir also said it is not easy to convince Umno leaders, especially those in positions of power in the government, to leave the party.

Even if they did leave, they would not dare to be seen as close to PPBM, which is openly calling for Najib to be unseated, he said.

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