

## **Mahathir: Kit Siang turned down ministerial post in the 70s**

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**By Nawar Firdaws**

### **Pakatan Harapan chairman says that if DAP leader had accepted Tun Abdul Razak's offer for party to join BN, he would have become a minister.**

SHAH ALAM: Lim Kit Siang once rejected an offer to become a minister, says former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, as he rubbished talk of the DAP supremo eyeing the nation's number one post.

The offer, according to Mahathir, came in the early 1970s when the late Tun Abdul Razak was prime minister, and DAP was offered the chance to join the then new Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, he said.

“Umno folks are so angry that I’m now good friends with Lim. They say if Umno falls, Lim will become the prime minister. But the fact is Lim could have been a minister.

“When Razak was forming BN he invited DAP, Gerakan and SUPP (Sarawak United Peoples’ Party).

“If Lim had wanted to become a minister, he would’ve joined. All those who joined got to be a minister. But he (Lim) didn’t even want to be a minister, what more a prime minister.”

Razak, who is current Prime Minister Najib Razak’s father, founded Barisan Nasional in 1973, to takeover from the previous ruling coalition, Alliance .

Mahathir was speaking for the first time as Pakatan Harapan chairman, to a crowd of around 1,000 people present at a ceramah here last night.

Umno leaders, right-wing Malay NGOs and the Malay media have all repeatedly claimed that Lim was using the PH platform to become prime minister. PH leaders however have said the allegation was merely Umno’s ploy to scare the Malays from voting for the opposition.

In February this year, Mahathir admitted that the sentiment was partially his fault, having said that the DAP was an “evil party that wanted to control Malaysia and one that did not care about the fate of the Malays”. He had also admitted how wrong he was in saying so previously.

And in the recently-announced PH leadership line-up, Lim’s name was visibly absent.

Incarcerated Anwar Ibrahim instead was named PH de facto leader, PKR’s Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail the president, while Lim’s son, Lim Guan Eng, PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin, and Amanah president Mohamad Sabu were appointed deputy presidents.

Meanwhile, Mohamad Sabu, who was also present at the ceramah, pointed to the hypocrisy of Umno. He said before the line-up was announced, Umno claimed the DAP was using Mahathir for political mileage.

“Suddenly they love the DAP, questioning why Lim’s name wasn’t in the Pakatan structure. Saying this meant DAP was being used by Mahathir.

“Hey Umno, what do you want? If before they said, ‘What do the Chinese want’, now we are asking what Umno wants.

“When they see the DAP moving to the back, that’s wrong to them. When the DAP moves to the front, they say the Chinese are in control.”

Mohamad Sabu, who is more popularly known as Mat Sabu, claimed this was the racial game being played by Umno, and which the public now understood.

“(DAP’s) Tony Pua has explained about how our country’s money was being stolen. But if the public still wants BN, then I think there is no need for politics anymore in Malaysia,” he added.

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