

Muhyiddin's Rich Experience His Biggest Asset

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By Sakini Mohd Said

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) – Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin’s fighting spirit and extensive experience will come in handy as he sets out to fulfil his responsibilities as the eighth prime minister of Malaysia.

Political analysts asked to comment on the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia founder and president’s appointment as prime minister expressed confidence in his ability to restore political stability and spur the nation’s economic growth.

The analysts are of the opinion that Muhyiddin, 72, is the right person to lead the nation as he has held various portfolios in the government during his political career that has spanned over four decades.



Azmi Hassan, geostrategist and political analyst. –foto BERNAMA (2020) ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Geostrategist Azmi Hassan, who is also a political analyst, said the Pagoh MP’s wealth of experience would serve as his biggest asset as he steers the nation amid intense challenges.

“He’s not only a seasoned politician but also has experience in government administration starting from the time he was appointed Johor menteri besar until he

became deputy prime minister and later home minister,” he told Bernama in an interview via Whats App.

EXPERIENCE

Muhyiddin, whose late father Muhammad Yassin Muhammad was a well-known Islamic scholar in Muar, became active in politics in 1978 after he was elected MP for the Pagoh Parliamentary constituency in Johor in 1978, a seat he has held for five terms now. He is also currently the State Assemblyman for Gambir, also in Johor.

Muhyiddin served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Foreign Affairs Ministry and was Deputy Federal Territories Minister and Deputy Trade and Industry Minister between 1981 and 1986 before he was appointed Johor Menteri Besar after winning the Bukit Serampang state seat in the seventh general election in 1986.



As Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's wide experience in government administration will come in handy. --fotoBERNAMA (2020) ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

With Muhyiddin at the helm until 1996, Johor saw rapid progress and rose to become one of the nation's most developed states.

His political career grew following his appointment as a full minister. He was Minister of Youth and Sports (1995-1999), Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs ((1999-2004), Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry (2004-2008), Minister of International Trade and Industry (2008-2009) and Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister (2009-2015).

In 2015, he was sacked as deputy prime minister and the following year, as UMNO deputy president. In August 2016, he founded Bersatu.

In May 2018, Muhyiddin was appointed deputy home minister under the Pakatan Harapan administration.

INTERESTING PERSONALITY



Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin with his wife Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman. --fotoBERNAMA (2020) ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Azmi said Muhyiddin is qualified to be prime minister in terms of his experience and character as he has proven to be a leader of integrity who does not hanker after posts.

“The fact that he was sacked as deputy prime minister and deputy president of UMNO during the Barisan Nasional administration speaks volumes for his character as he had taken a firm and courageous stand against the goings-on then for the sake of the party.

“His firmness reflected his courage and honesty and he didn’t think about the consequences of his action on his position in the party and government then. This clearly showed that Muhyiddin is not greedy for office as he could have just maintained his silence then to save his DPM post. To me, this is an important criterion for the people to consider, that is Muhyiddin is someone they can trust,” he said.

Azmi said interestingly, Muhyiddin’s name did not crop up as a candidate for prime minister whilst former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and PKR president

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim were engaged in a debate over the issue concerning the transition of leadership from Dr Mahathir to Anwar.

“Muhyiddin’s name never appeared but in the end he garnered the support of a majority (of MPs) because they believed that he is the right candidate for the prime minister’s post,” he added.

QUALIFIED



Dr Noor Nirwandy Mat Noordin (left) and Prof Datuk Dr Teo Kok Seong.

Senior lecturer at Universiti Teknologi Mara’s Centre of Media and Information Warfare Studies Dr Noor Nirwandy Mat Noordin said Muhyiddin’s experience of serving two different coalitions – BN and Pakatan Harapan – would be an advantage for him.

“A reconciliation of the best government policies of the two different eras can be done to either continue with the policies or reintroduce them under his new administration,” he said.

Principal fellow of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia’s Institute of Ethnic Studies Prof Datuk Dr Teo Kok Seong said Muhyiddin’s experience working at the federal and state level would help him to govern the nation better, particularly in terms of federal-state relations.

His appointment as prime minister should bring closure to the leadership crisis that gripped the nation last week, he said, adding that moving a no-confidence motion

against Muhyiddin in Parliament would be akin to challenging the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's decision.

Universiti Utara Malaysia head of Cluster on Governance and Integrity Prof Dr Ahmad Martadha Mohamed concurred with Teo. He said the appointment process was carried out in line with provisions in the Federal Constitution and urged the losing faction to respect the King's decision.

"However, if they still want to push for a change based on current developments, then whatever action they take should be done in accordance with the Constitution. We can only attain political stability when all parties respect the rules and laws of the country," he added.

Translated by Rema Nambiar

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