

Even more chaos if Muhyiddin quit as PM, says political scientist

KUCHING: The political situation at the federal level can turn even more chaotic if Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had resigned as prime minister, a political scientist said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) Bintulu Campus' Faculty of Humanity, Management and Science Dean Prof Dr Jayum Jawan said Muhyiddin's resignation would result in a scramble for power and there would be no clear winner.

"It will drag up more intense politicking as the largest Malay blocs would be criss-crossing the parliamentary floor to build a majority," he said when contacted over the latest leadership crisis besieging Putrajaya.

For now, Jayum said what is clear is that Muhyiddin has to be assumed to still have the simple majority which made it possible for him to be appointed prime minister in March 2020.

"What happened when Umno president (Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi) announced the party's supreme council's approval to withdraw support for Muhyiddin is still subject to interpretation.

"Some of the members of the Umno supreme council are not MPs, so how does that feature into PM losing support for his position? Withdrawal of Umno's support as decided by the supreme council appears to be for Muhyiddin as PM. It was not stated clearly whether the withdrawal of support was for PN coalition.

"In the press conference yesterday (Tuesday), the Umno president never said Umno had left the PN coalition.

"There is a little confusion here. Can one withdraw support for the PN leader and yet at the same time still be with the PN coalition, bearing in mind



Prof Dr Jayum Jawan

Muhyiddin is the leader of PN?" Jayum asked.

He said even Umno ministers were divided on this since only Datuk Seri Shamsul Anuar Nasarah had quit as Energy and Natural Resources Minister.

Jayum added that there were also many state governments formed by the coalition of PN, with Muhyiddin's Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia and Umno as key allies.

"So, this withdrawal of support is not solid. Hence, in my opinion, Muhyiddin has not lost any majority as Umno claimed.

"In short, Umno needs to be clear on whether it is withdrawing support for the PM or withdrawing support for PN as the government?" Jayum said.

He added that as of now, Umno does not have clear partners that it can claim to have a simple majority with 112 MPs in parliament.

"Bersatu and Umno has about the same number of MPs. PKR has slightly more at 35," he said, referring to Muhyiddin's Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia.

Jayum said he agreed with Muhyiddin that he needed to prove he still had the numbers in parliament to enable him to carry on serving as Malaysian premier.

According to several political observers, the PN plus coalition as of yesterday has the support of 103 MPs.