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Mahathir - Umno

UMNO WANTS COMMITTED MEMBERS, MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 20 (Bernama) -- Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the party does not need members who are not committed and do not hold to democratic principles.

He said the action of Tun Mustapha in resigning as Sabah Affairs Minister and Umno member showed that the former Umno supreme council member did not subscribe to democratic spirit.

"We do not need members who are not committed," the Prime Minister told reporters after launching the books "Voices of Malaysia"; "Suara Keprihatinan Malaysia" and "Bosnia : Testament to War Crimes As Told By Survivors" at Parliament House here today.

Tun Mustapha, in his open letter distributed to reporters through his son, Datu Badaruddin, in Kota Kinabalu yesterday, said that he left Umno because he could no longer cooperate with Umno division leaders as "my stand and principles greatly differ with theirs."

Dr Mahathir said it was Tun Mustapha's right to leave the Cabinet and the party.

However, Tun Mustapha's resignation from Umno would not affect the Barisan Nasional chances in next month's Sabah state election.--more

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Mahathir - Umno 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir said Umno needed members who were committed and who would not quit the party as they liked.

"We may differ in our views ....but we cannot leave the party because of this," he said.

He said if Tun Mustapha believed in democracy, he should abide by the decision of the majority and not to leave the party.

The Prime Minister said the government had no plans yet to appoint a new Minister for Sabah Affairs.

Asked to comment on speculations that Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) is keen to rejoin the Barisan Nasional, Dr Mahathir said that this was not a new thing.

However, the BN could not indiscriminately readmit the PBS which had "stabbed the coalition in the back" in the last general election, he said.

"We have to know the extent of their commitment and the proof," he said.--Bernama

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