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Mahathir-S46

DR MAHATHIR SAYS EQUAL TREATMENT FOR FORMER S46 MEMBERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants Umno members to accept former members of Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) into Umno with open heart and to treat them as equals to the existing members.

The Prime Minister said Umno members should not regard former members of S46 which was dissolved on Oct 6 as "Umno members from Semangat 46."

"There are no Umno members from Semangat 46...there is none. We don't have factions in Umno, all are Umno members," he said when winding up the debate on the last day of the party general assembly here today.

Last Tuesday, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah handed over to Dr Mahathir 200,000 application forms from former S46 members to join Umno en bloc following the dissolution of the Umno splinter party led by him.

Dr Mahathir said all Umno members are the same, whether they are former S46 members or not.

"They have the same rights and responsibilities as the other members. Our cause is also their cause as they are now Umno members," he added.

At a press conference later, Dr Mahathir said he was aware that slight problems may arise at the branch and divisional levels with the entry of former S46 members.

"The place is small but many people want to come in, obviously it will become crowded but all this can be overcome," he said in reply to a question on the fear possibly raised by leaders at the branch and division levels regarding the entry of former S46 members into Umno en bloc.

What is important is that Umno members must be sincere in accepting former S46 members at the respective levels, Dr Mahathir said.

During the debate on the Presidential address, Kedah delegate Datuk Badruddin Amiruldin wanted Umno headquarters to ensure that the entry of former S45 members into the party at the divisional and branch levels was made through the normal channel.

"We accept them, but they must enter through the door, not through the window," Badruddin said. -- BERNAMA

SJA ZKS AO