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Not involved in Dr M's party

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DISTANCING THEMSELVES: Top figures named as office bearers deny involvement

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SEVERAL high-profile individuals, including former Wanita Umno chief Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, have distanced themselves from Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's efforts to form a new political party.

They denied involvement in the party after an unverified image, which purportedly showed the office-bearers' list of "Parti Melayu Baru Bersatu", went viral on social media on Saturday.

"I don't know anything about Dr Mahathir's new party and I have nothing to do with it. I am an Umno member.

"I am not interested in politicking, bickering or supporting individuals," Rafidah, who is also former international trade and industry minister, told the *New Straits Times* yesterday.

Former attorney-general Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail also denied involvement in Dr Mahathir's party after his name was listed as one of the party's supreme council members.

"The recent release of a list of people supposedly involved in the formation of the new party is fake and a lie.

"I have never been nor will I ever be involved in politics. I am and will always be a professional," he told Bernama yesterday.

The list claimed that the new party would be headed by former Umno deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, with former Umno vice-pres-

ident Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal serving as deputy president.

Former de facto law minister Datuk Mohd Zaid Ibrahim, former Pas vice-president Datuk Husam Musa, former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir and Rafidah were named as party vice-presidents.

Former minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar described the name list as "nonsensical".

He said it was illogical for non-politicians like former Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz and Perlis Mufti Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin to be among the party's leadership.

"The inclusion of non-politicians like myself in the list does not make any sense," said Wahid, who was named as a supreme council member.

Former *Utusan Malaysia* editor Ku Seman Ku Hussein also denied any involvement with the new party.

Dr Mahathir had last week announced the impending formation of a new political party and a new coalition consisting of opposition parties.

He had said the new coalition would operate as a single entity against Barisan Nasional in the next general election.

Former Malacca chief minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik and youth activist Syed Saddiq Abdul Rahman also denied any links to the list and the new party.

Dr Mohammad Fairus Khairuddin, a former Penang deputy chief minister, also issued the



Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz



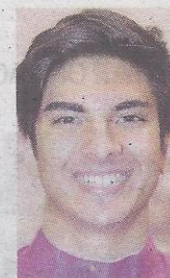
Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail



Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar



Ku Seman Ku Hussein



Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman



Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik

same denial.

"I have never been involved with the group. And here I would like to reiterate my loyalty to Umno's struggles and party president, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak." Additional reporting by Melissa Darlyne Chow