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RISE OF SPLINTER PARTIES

# PAS: DR M BEHIND MALAY DISUNITY

Time for ex-premier to bow out, says Mahfodz

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**P**AS slammed Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for blaming the party for Malay disunity.

Its ulama chief Datuk Dr Mahfodz Mohamed said it was the former premier who was responsible for the disunity.

He said Dr Mahathir was the reason behind the rise of political splinter parties among the Malay community when he led the country.

This includes the emergence of Semangat 46 in the 80s and Parti Keadilan in the 90s due to dis-

satisfaction over the sacking of his then deputy, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, he said.

“Dr Mahathir was also the one who divided Umno through Semangat 46 and Parti Keadilan,” he said.

Mahfodz was responding to Dr Mahathir’s blog posting yesterday, where the former premier said the formation of Pas was a disaster as it divided the Malays.

“Even though Malays are the majority in Malaysia, but with the presence of Pas, the Malays are no longer the majority.”

Dr Mahathir added that Pas, as an Umno splinter party, had weakened the political power of the Malays and prevented their development, more than the Independent of Malaya Party headed by Datuk Onn Jaafar.

“As all Malays are Muslim, the formation of Pas had not only divided the Malays but also the Muslims,” he said.

Mahfodz also held Dr Mahathir responsible for detaining Pas leaders during Operasi Lalang without trial in 1987, further weakening Malay unity.

“Dr Mahathir has not changed since the time he was in office.

“He should know that one is allowed to speak freely in a democracy but it has to be based on sense and take into account people’s dignity. We too have our limits,” he said.

Mahfodz also remarked that Dr Mahathir’s time in politics was over and it was time for the longest-serving prime minister in Malaysia to bow out gracefully.



**Datuk Dr Mahfodz Mohamed**

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“He has to give way for new blood. But he has been unhappy with both former prime minister (Tun Abdullah) Badawi and Prime Minister (Datuk Seri) Najib (Razak).

“It’s as though he still wants to be in power so that his son (Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir) can become prime minister.”

Pas election director Datuk Mustafa Ali said Dr Mahathir was being a sour grape after Pas rejected his calls to work in a united front for the next general election.

“Why is he trying to get Pas to join Pakatan Harapan if it is a disaster? There is no way the opposition can capture Putrajaya without Pas,” he said.

Mustafa said the PPBM chairman did not understand the opposition psyche, which was divided along ideological lines.

He added that Dr Mahathir was finding it tough to run the opposition-based parties.

“PPBM too has yet to unite,” he added.

In the blog posting, Dr Mahathir also said Pas’s move to contest the upcoming polls on its own would only undermine the party and other opposition parties.

Based on Pas’s previous achievements and if the party goes ahead with its plan to contest 80 parliamentary seats, Dr Mahathir predicted that the Islamic party would win only 15 seats.

“Most of the 80 seats, Pas knows it will lose. But based on Pas tradition, it will also contest in places where it has no hope of winning,” he said.

He said when Pas contested the general election on its own, its achievement was quite low.

“Technically, Pas will be contesting against Barisan Nasional-Umno, in addition to going against other parties’ candidates,” Dr Mahathir said.