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Hope he stays longer, says Dr Mahathir about Zaid joining DAP

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PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad hopes that Datuk Zaid Ibrahim's stay in DAP will last longer than his previous stints in other political parties.

Speaking during a press conference to announce Zaid's entry into DAP, the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia chairman said the culture of party-hopping should stop because the success of a political party hinged on loyalty.

"I hope he will stay in DAP a little bit longer," Dr Mahathir said to laughter during the event held at Zaid's house in Tropicana Golf Resort here yesterday.

"The problem is in this country, we have a race of frogs. These frogs,

they like to hop here, hop there.

"When I try to catch one, they've already hopped somewhere else. I think we need to eradicate this culture," he said in a short speech.

He was among Opposition party leaders present at Zaid's house. Among them were DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang and acting DAP chairman Tan Kok Wai.

Earlier, when asked by the press how he felt about joining a new political party for the fourth time, Zaid said: "It's not four times. I did not leave Umno, I was sacked."

Appointed as the law minister in March 2008, Zaid resigned from the Cabinet six months later following his criticism of the then Internal Security Act.

He was later suspended by Umno and joined PKR in June 2009.

Zaid had a fallout with the PKR leadership and formed Parti Kesejahteraan Insan Tanah Air in December 2010.

He eventually resigned as its president due to internal squabbles.

Early last month, Zaid hinted that he might make a political return in the next general election, possibly in Johor Baru or his hometown of Kota Baru on an opposition ticket, as long as it was not PAS.

In a speech at the press conference, Lim acknowledged that many people had asked him why Zaid was joining DAP and how long he would last in the party based on his track record of his short stays in political parties.

"I have known Zaid for a long time, and I know his political thinking. He knows what is right and

good for the nation," he said.

On Zaid's weaknesses as a politician, Lim said Zaid should play the role of a team player and "not a prima donna".

Earlier, Zaid said he joined DAP to bring the party's message of equality and justice to Malays whom he claimed were hoodwinked into believing that DAP was a chauvinistic Chinese party.

On a separate issue, Dr Mahathir welcomed the formation of an inquiry to probe the loss of billions of ringgit by Bank Negara in the 1990s.

However, he said an inquiry should also be held to investigate the RM2.6bil donation issue and 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) as well.

He claimed that the issue of Bank

Negara's forex losses was raised to divert attention from current issues surrounding 1MDB.

"Don't try to hide by referring to something that had occurred years ago. This is just trying to divert attention, and I don't care about such people," he said.

Former Bank Negara assistant governor Datuk Abdul Murad Khalid was reported to have claimed that the central bank had suffered US\$10bil (RM44bil) in forex market losses in the early 1990s, far higher than it had admitted.

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