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PARTY DEBATE

PM: Rahim can join if found suitable

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CYBERJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has not ruled out the possibility of accepting former Umno vice-president Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik into Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM).

The PPBM chairman said the party would accept Rahim's application for membership "if it was suitable".

"We will evaluate, and if he is suitable, we will accept. If he is not, we will not accept," he told reporters after attending the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) Consultation 2018 Dialogue Session here yesterday.

Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik

"We don't accept everyone, we will evaluate them first. When he (Rahim) was an independent, he had already left Umno. If he is suitable, we will accept him," he said.

ka chief minister, announced his decision to quit Umno before submitting his membership application form to join PPBM.

The decision to consider former Umno leaders into the fold, however, has triggered a debate within PPBM.

In **Kota Baru**, the Kelantan PPBM grassroots urged the party leadership to not take in former Umno elected representatives.

PPBM, they argued, should not take in "rubbish" from Umno as the latter had previously ridiculed and opposed PPBM.

PPBM member Mohd Tahir Taib, 49, from Pasir Puteh, said it would be foolish of PPBM to give ex-Umno leaders an opportunity.

"The fact is, these ex-Umno leaders have not seen the light, but are merely out to safeguard

longer with the government.

"While we can accept rank-and-file members to boost our numbers, we cannot accept it if we take in elected representatives from Umno," he said.

Zaib Ibrahim, 49, from Pasir Mas said the party leadership must think of harmony within the party.

In **Parit Buntar,** Perak PKR said it would welcome any Umno leaders or members into the fold.

Perak PKR secretary Abdul Yunus Jamhari said the PH government practised democracy and was open to anyone joining PH component parties.

"Perak PKR has no objection and welcomes any move to strengthen PKR and PH.

"However, they should not see this as an opportunity to escape from cases such as bribery and abuse of power," he said.

He said former Umno members keen on joining Perak PKR have to accept the new political culture which prioritises service to the people without playing