

Why hasn't action been taken against Umno, asks Dr M

PUTRAJAYA: Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has questioned why the relevant authorities have yet to initiate an investigation into the wrongdoings committed by Umno.

Dr Mahathir, who is prime minister, said it was baffling that despite Umno's alleged misconduct, no action had been taken against the party.

"During my time as Umno president, the party was banned when three divisions failed to conduct meetings.

"Bersatu was also banned just before the 14th General Election.

"From what I see, Umno has committed many wrongdoings but it is still accepted, and hasn't been banned.

"We are not calling for it (Umno's deregistration) but are merely voicing our opinion," he said after chairing Bersatu's supreme council meeting yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said the meeting also raised questions over Umno's financial standing after the latter reportedly sold off its stake in several media companies recently.

"At the meeting today (yesterday), we spoke about Umno becoming rich. According to a re-

port in *The Edge*, they acquired RM2 billion. They made a lot of money when they sold their stake in the media companies.

"What are they doing with the money?" he asked.

At the same time, Dr Mahathir said the door was also open to ex-Umno members to join Bersatu, provided they met the criteria.

He said the invitation only applied to those who did not have any "problems" such as court cases.

"We can't accept those who have court cases against them. Only those who are free of these

will be accepted," he said.

Asked on how many Umno leaders were expected to jump to Bersatu, Dr Mahathir said he had no estimated figure.

On a separate matter, Dr Mahathir said he was unaware of the appointment of Jalil Rasheed as the new Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) president and group chief executive, which would take effect on Oct 1.

He said he did not have any information on the appointment of Jalil, who is the investment director for the Singapore office of United Kingdom-based fund manager Invesco.

"PNB is under (Tan Sri Dr) Zeti Akhtar Aziz. She didn't tell me anything," he said.

Dr Mahathir was asked if Jalil was a suitable candidate to understand and champion issues pertaining to the economy of the Bumiputeras, given that his experience was mostly gained abroad.

PNB, in a statement on Wednesday, said Jalil's appointment was in line with the government's wish to make optimal use of Malaysian global talent and was consistent with the fund's strategic initiative to diversify its assets globally.