

# 'MPs looking to forge new alliances'

PM clarifies meeting at Azmin's home but seven from Umno deny such a move

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By **ZAKIAH KOYA**  
and **BERNARD CHEAH**  
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

**BANGI:** Opposition MPs who met Datuk Seri Azmin Ali at his residence were looking to forge new alliances, says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I asked Azmin what he had discussed with the 22 Umno MPs. He said the Umno people had lost their party (direction) and they asked if they should join other parties and they wanted to confirm if they should support our leadership," the Prime Minister told reporters after opening the first alumni convention of the Malaysia Future Leaders School at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia here.

Dr Mahathir also saw nothing

wrong with the meeting.

"He has the right to meet anybody. If his party does not agree, then his party should tell him. I mind my own party," said Dr Mahathir, who is Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia chairman.

Azmin, who is Economic Affairs Minister, sparked a controversy after meeting the Umno MPs at his official residence on Nov 18, which he had claimed was to sort out allocations for their constituencies.

Dr Mahathir was asked what was discussed during his separate meetings with PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Azmin, who is PKR deputy president, on Thursday.

"Anwar said there were ministers who were giving out projects.

"I told him that Cabinet ministers have the right to give out projects

and allocations in their own constituencies, but no need to give to other constituencies," said Dr Mahathir.

On a separate note, Dr Mahathir said he would have rejoined Umno if its leadership had not used the party to get rich.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Annuar Musa had said Dr Mahathir should rejoin if he wanted the support of Malay-majority parties.

"If he (Annuar) had not spoilt Umno, I would have chosen Umno. But he and his friends Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had abused Umno to enrich themselves.

"I can't join a party like that," said Dr Mahathir.

Meanwhile, seven Umno MPs, in a joint statement last night, denied that those who met Azmin had lost

faith in the party's leadership.

The group also denied they were considering joining another political party.

"Never once was such a stand mentioned by any Barisan Nasional MP during that meeting," they said.

They pointed out that Annuar, on Twitter, had said the claim was defamatory.

"Annuar Musa had also mentioned that those who were at the meeting are faithful party members," the group said.

The MPs also said that development in their respective constituencies, including mosques, surau and community halls, was raised during the meeting with Azmin.

"Aside from that, with the recent victory in the Tanjung Piailai by-election, we also had asked Azmin to

join Umno because this is proof that the rakyat now trust Umno and Barisan.

"And we reiterate that we will not move from Umno or jump ship," the MPs said.

The statement was signed by Kuala Krau MP Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Mohamed Said, Jempol MP Datuk Mohd Salim Sharif, Jelebu MP Datuk Jalaluddin Alias, Cameron Highlands MP Ramli Mohd Nor, Lipis MP Datuk Abdul Rahman Mohamad, Kuala Kangsar MP Datin Mastura Mohd Yazid and Pengerang MP Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said.

Watch the video  
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