

DR MAHATHIR: DIVIDE US? THEY CAN TRY

PH Secretarial Council rejects idea on grounds it will lead to return of race-based politics

ADIB POVERA
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

THEY can try." That was Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's short response over alleged attempts by certain quarters to divide Pakatan Harapan parties.

Dr Mahathir, who is also PH chairman, was asked to comment on a suggestion from Sembong member of parliament Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein that Pas and Umno join the current administration without the participation of DAP and Parti Amanah Negara.

Hishammuddin, who is former Umno vice-president, said this in a post on his social media account on Sunday.

He said unification was important and must be championed by political leaders.

The former defence minister had also said leaders needed to be courageous and put aside their emotions.

Dr Mahathir, when asked if he

had met Hishammuddin over the suggestion, said he had not.

Hishammuddin's suggestion, however, was yesterday shot down by the PH Secretarial Council on the grounds that it would only lead to the return of a race-based political culture and governance.

The council, in a statement, said it held firm to the principles of "Muafakat PH", which was collectively agreed upon by PKR, Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, Amanah and DAP to remain in the PH government, of which Parti Warisan Sabah is also a member in the cabinet.

The statement was signed by PH secretary-general Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, PKR secretary-general Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasion, Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Wira Marzuki Yahya, Amanah secretary-general Datuk Wira Anuar Tahir and DAP national organising secretary Anthony Loke.

The council also urged Hishammuddin and his allies to stop his campaign of espousing the idea of forming a new government without DAP and Amanah.