

# More Bersatu members leave for Dr Mahathir

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Bersatu is very much expected following Dr Mahathir's departure, it is too early to say that Bersatu would totally collapse.

"There are still many who support Muhyiddin. It will indeed weaken Bersatu, but the party can still hold its own," Universiti Utara Malaysia's Politics and International Relations Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani said.

Meanwhile, in Shah Alam, the division deputy chief Mohd Azlan Shah Mohd Arshad announced that three of the division's committee members and chiefs of five branches have also resigned from Bersatu.

He said the decision is made without any pressure and claimed that this would be the first wave of similar moves by members of the Shah Alam division.

"The resignation letter will be sent to the Bersatu secretary general earliest by today," he told a media conference, adding that the former Bersatu members will immediately start work on gathering new supporters for Dr Mahathir's new party.

Dr Mahathir earlier said that a Malay-based party will replace



Mohd Azlan Shah (seated, centre) announcing 3 of Shah Alam Bersatu division's committee members and chiefs of 5 branches have also resigned

Pic by Muhd Amin Nahrul

Bersatu. Dr Mahathir's and his supporters' memberships were revoked by Bersatu after they decided not to be part of the Perikatan Nasional (PN) bloc in Parliament.

Dr Mahathir said at a press conference last Friday that the new party aims to redeem the dignity of the Malays that have been "tainted by treachery, cheating, lying, cor-

ruption and greed due to the doings of other Malay party leaders".

He said the new party will not be aligned with either PH or PN.

While the party's main focus will be on Malay issues, it will also uphold the interests of minority groups.

The unnamed party is expected to be registered soon and will contest in the Slim by-election

scheduled for Aug 29.

Dr Mahathir's new party currently has the support of two Johor MPs, namely Sri Gading MP Shahrudin Mohd Salleh and Simpang Renggam MP Dr Maszlee Malik.

Muar MP Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman, who was also sacked from Bersatu, has yet to declare his support for the new party.

Bersatu supreme council mem-

bers — Datuk Abdul Kadir Jasin, Tariq Ismail Mustafa, Abu Bakar Yahya and Ulya Agamah Husamuddin — exited the party over the weekend, which also saw a series of announcements from various Bersatu divisions and branches that decided to leave.

Among them is Jeram assemblyman cum Kuala Selangor division chief Mohd Shaib Rosli. He said the Kuala Selangor Bersatu division would be disbanded.

In Langkawi, 16 branches and a division in Langkawi led by Dr Mahathir were said to be automatically dissolved due to the resignation of its deputy head Shukor Bahari, together with 22 out of 26 branch committee leaders. The division comprises some 4,900 members.

A report recently revealed that tension seems to be brewing in Johor as several Bersatu divisions are also expected to be dissolved.

Before the crisis, Bersatu had 189 divisions nationwide and about 300,000 members in total.

Akhramsyah reportedly said around 70% of the total Bersatu members in Peninsular Malaysia or about 200,000 would leave the party amid the current development.