

'Not a chairman, not even a member'

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Hamzah: Dr M and four others not expelled, they terminated their memberships

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PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the other four former leaders of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) terminated their membership on their own volition and were not expelled, insists Home Minister and Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin.

He said the five terminated their membership because they went against the party constitution, adding that they would now have to ask permission if they want to come to the Bersatu headquarters.

Hamzah said that on May 18, former Bersatu chairman and former prime minister Dr Mahathir, together with Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman, Dr Maszlee Malik and Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah, had plotted to oust Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin together with opposition Pakatan, despite Bersatu having already exited Pakatan.

"Dr Mahathir is no more the chairman and he can say anything but today not only is he not the chairman, he is also not a member of the party.

"Once you are no more a member, do not come here (Bersatu party headquarters) anymore. But if you want to come, you are welcome but you must ask permission from time to time.

"If someone had already taken your room, would you come barging in? We have manners, follow our etiquette," said Hamzah, when asked if there is a point of no return for Dr Mahathir and the four others into the party.

Hamzah said that the letters sent

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Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin

out by Kapt (R) Muhammad Suhaimi Yahya to the five were notices informing them that they had terminated their membership through their own actions against the party constitution and not letters of expulsion.

"We could have sent the notices on May 19, a day after the Dewan Rakyat sitting, but then it was Hari Raya, and we decided to wait after Hari Raya," said Hamzah.

On May 28, the five were issued letters stating that they had terminated their memberships with immediate effect under the Clauses 10.2.2 and 10.2.3 of the Bersatu party constitution by preferring to sit with the opposition bloc in Parliament on May 18.

(According to 10.2.2 and 10.2.3, the membership of a member will be terminated automatically through the actions of announcing their exit from the party and partaking or joining as a member of any other political party in the country.)

"We received complaints of Dr Mahathir wanting to be with Pakatan, asking for continuance of



By the book: Hamzah holding up the Bersatu constitution book during the press conference at Yayasan Selangor.

Parliament jointly with Pakatan leaders, filing a vote of no confidence against Muhyiddin as the Prime Minister as well as holding a press conference on May 18 to state that he will continue his efforts to oust Muhyiddin as the PM.

"We forwarded these complaints to the Bersatu disciplinary committee. Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin as the chairman of the disciplinary committee decided that Dr Mahathir and the four need not be referred to the disciplinary committee.

"Some cases can be referred to the disciplinary committee and some cases need not," said Hamzah.

Hamzah also defended himself against allegations that he was

breaking up the party.

He further said that he had undertaken all orders by Dr Mahathir who was then-chairman to strengthen Malay political leaders as well as to weaken the people's support for DAP.

"I joined the party at the invitation from Dr Mahathir in February last year and my friends (from Umno) too agreed to join.

"I did the work on the orders of the then-prime minister. For example, the Malay Dignity Congress on Oct 6 was done in a big way and there was no way I could have done it without the orders of Dr Mahathir.

"What I did then was not to break

up the party but what he himself wanted. He wanted all the Malay leaders to unite and he also asked me in a few discussions with him at his home to find ways to exit Pakatan.

"It was at his own request. The rest is history when Dr Mahathir resigned on Feb 24.

"Muhyiddin himself was shocked and said, 'Oh my God what has happened? I said I do not know sir. He never told us anything.

"The Yang di-Pertuan Agong then had to replace him and through the Constitution, appointed Muhyiddin as the PM.

"It was not because we had an agenda, but because he himself resigned and we had to form our government (Perikatan Nasional).

"Dr Mahathir himself was the candidate for the eighth PM. I worked hard to get him support of MPs.

"He himself resigned on Feb 24 and he himself could not get the support of the majority of the MPs.

"How could I be the one breaking up (unity)? God has chosen one prime minister who could replace Dr Mahathir. Give him support," said Hamzah.

He said this at a press conference which was delayed for one hour and changed venues a few times, before it was finally held at the party headquarters in Yayasan Selangor here yesterday.

Hamzah also said that the five could not contest in any of the party polls as they were no longer members.

As for Bersatu members who continue to support Dr Mahathir and the four others, Hamzah said, "If you do not want to follow the party constitution, then you should leave."