

**Bar Council Has Become Political Party – Mahathir
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PUTRAJAYA, May 16 (Bernama) -- As the Bar Council's concern seems to border on the politics of the country, it appears to have become a political party, noted Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Thus, the former prime minister said, it should let other organisations take over the professional side (of the Bar Council) to avoid confusion.

"I think a professional organisation should concentrate more on the profession, but it is quite obvious that the Bar Council has become a political party.

"Next, we'll have the Malaysian Medical Association, the architects, all becoming political parties, and there'll be a lot of confusion," he told reporters here at the Perdana Leadership Foundation today.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on a proposal to form a new organisation for lawyers to represent their profession, welfare and legal interests, as the existing Bar Council had failed to defend itself as a professional body with integrity.

Asked to comment on Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim's resignation from the DAP, he simply said: "I knew from the beginning that the DAP was not the party for him...I do not know why he joined (the DAP)."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Chancellor of Perdana University, earlier witnessed the signing of two memorandi of understanding (MoU) between the university with Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (Mardi) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

The MoU with Mardi was to strengthen, facilitate, promote and develop cooperation and collaboration on agriculture research related to health, while the MoU with UPM was to strengthen, promote and develop sciences and academic cooperation between the two institutions.

Perdana University was launched last year, by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, with the objective of improving the quality of medical education and healthcare in the country.

Currently, it has two medical schools. They are Perdana University Graduate School of Medicine, in collaboration with John Hopkins University School of Medicine which offers a four-year graduate entry programme based on the United States curriculum, and PU-RCSI School of Medicine which offers a five-year programme based on a conventional curriculum of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

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