

**Umno not becoming stupid, say party leaders**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**Sept 26 , 2013**  
**BY YISWAREE PALANSAMY**

Umno lawmakers do not accept former premier and ex-Umno president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's rebuke that Umno leaders who remain too long in their positions will leave behind members who are more stupid than them.

The party's Youth wing deputy chief Datuk Razali Ibrahim said while anyone is free to air their views, it was not right to call long-serving Umno leaders stupid.

".... but don't say Umno members are stupid. Umno members are smart and can work," he told The Malaysian Insider today when asked if Dr Mahathir's sting will be taken as a cue to improve the party.

Razali likened Dr Mahathir's remarks to a "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law snub" (sindir anak menantu), which means remarks made among relations are not something to take offence over.

"This is just the art of politics and we should take it at face value... this is the flavour of the month since Umno is going to have its party polls," he added.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin questioned the definition of the term "long-serving" used by Dr Mahathir.

"When you say too long there must be a period. What is the period? He was the prime minister for more than 20 years, is that too long? Or is over 30 years considered long?" he asked when met at the Parliament.

Hamzah said the question should be put to Dr Mahathir as he was the one who used the term "too long".

"The most important thing is, when someone is capable of leading, they should be given a chance.

"The period of time does not matter, it's the credibility of the leader that is important," he added.

Hamzah said he was not running for a Supreme Council seat as he felt it necessary to focus on his ministry, instead.

"But others will feel that the party needs them more than anything."

Malacca Puteri Umno chief Mas Ermieyati Samsudin said it was not right for Dr Mahathir to use the word "stupid" as it was very harsh towards Umno leaders.

"We need to join forces to help make Umno more relevant by working with both senior and young leaders."

"Tun M... we love him but I am shocked that he said such a thing," she said. - September

26, 2013.

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