

Dr Mahathir hurting Umno, right for him to quit, says minister
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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has made the right move to leave Umno as it is pointless for him to remain with the party, says Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak.

Reacting to news of the former prime minister's announcement to leave the party, Salleh said Dr Mahathir's decision was "probably for the best because when one's relationship with the party or the party leader is no longer tenable then it is pointless for one to remain in the party".

He added that this was the third time now that the longest serving prime minister had been out of Umno, having been sacked the first time in 1969 by then prime minister and party president, Tunku Abdul Rahman.

The second time was in May 2008, over unhappiness with Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi the then prime minister who had led Barisan Nasional to dismal results in the general election that year.

"Dr Mahathir's actions are hurting the party and for him to remain in the party while at the same time going against the party does not seem logical.

"If Dr Mahathir wants to continue to attack Umno then he should do so outside Umno," Salleh wrote in his blog.

Salleh is currently the party's Sabah liaison deputy chairman.

He said Dr Mahathir's move to quit the party was the "noble and ethical thing to do".

He added that he was saddened by the circumstances of Dr Mahathir's quitting as it was in opposition to the prime minister's leadership.

Salleh said Dr Mahathir had done a lot for the country in his 22 years as prime minister but his term was not entirely free of blemish.

"But the events over the last year and his resignation today will be remembered more than the good he has done."

For more than a year, Dr Mahathir has openly called for Najib to step down over controversies in debt-laden 1Malaysia Development Berhad and the RM2.6 billion donation deposited in the prime minister's personal bank account.

Salleh predicted that Dr Mahathir would continue being a vocal critic of Najib and Umno and reminded the public not to let the criticism descend to "gutter politics".

"I realise this matter is not going to end here and that we shall continue to hear from

Dr Mahathir.

"However, I just hope we can maintain some dignity and decorum and not drag the country down with gutter politics." – February 29, 2016.

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