

PPBM: Kamarulazman's exit won't affect party

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Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia vice-president Abdul Rashid Asari denies power struggle in fledgling party.

KUALA LUMPUR: Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) leaders have brushed off the resignation of one of its founding members who yesterday quit the party out of disappointment with its direction and leaders.

"Maybe his crony didn't pick him," PPBM chairman Dr Mahathir Mohamad said when asked to comment on supreme council member Kamarulazman Habibur Rahman's decision.

However Mahathir, who had earlier given a speech at a function here last night, did not elaborate further.

Meanwhile, one of the party's vice-presidents, Abdul Rashid Asari said it was Kamarulazman's right to leave the party if he felt he was not being treated right or could not fit in, or if he felt alienated.

The lawyer also rubbished Kamarulazman's claim that a power struggle was taking place in the party, especially when it came to choosing its division chiefs, adding that no trouble had arisen in other states.

"As a vice-president I know how each state chooses its divisional leaders," Rashid told reporters.

Kamarulazman, who is also the Telok Kemang PPBM division chief, yesterday rejected the offer to be made the party liaison chairman for Negeri Sembilan, alleging that there was a "caste system" in the party which saw some individuals cast aside for posts they deserved, in favour of newer members who are "friendly" to certain leaders.

Rashid denied Kamarulazman's claim that the party practised cronyism, pointing out that party members did not know each other until they decided to work together.

"So how can you call it cronyism?"

Rashid also said Kamarulazman's exit would not affect the party and that resignations were a common feature in any political outfit.

In announcing his resignation yesterday, Kamarulazman said he was disappointed over the direction of the barely one-year-old party, which according to him was hijacked by former UMNO members looking solely for power and position.

He claimed that there were two groups in the party, with one group undermining the efforts of those who had worked hard since the formation of the party, just to secure positions.

Kamarulzaman also lashed out at PPBM leaders like president Muhyiddin Yassin and his deputy Mukhriz Mahathir, both of whom he claimed were not happy with his views on certain matters involving the party and its direction.

He claimed that there were problems within PPBM which were “not handled well”, suggesting that at this rate, the party would not be ready to compete against UMNO for votes in the Malay heartland.

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