

**UMNO member can join Bersatu, but will not be given leading roles as leaders - Dr Mahathir**

**BERNAMA**

**25/10/2018**

BANGKOK, Oct 25 (Bernama) – Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) welcomes any UMNO member who is 'disgusted' with the party to join Bersatu, but they will be barred from contesting in party election at least for a certain period of times.

The Prime Minister and Bersatu Chairman said this was because the party was formed mainly to get rid of corruption and intended to stay corruption free.

"We hope people who are disgusted with UMNO would eventually join us, but we cannot give them leading roles as leaders of Bersatu, they have to stay for sometimes, barred from contesting in party election because we don't want Bersatu to become like UMNO, to become corrupt," he said in a dialogue session with the Malaysian diaspora, here, today.

Dr Mahathir said although Bersatu was a fair copy of UMNO in terms of membership, it had different philosophy and ideas.

Thus, he did not reject the idea of Bersatu becoming like a new UMNO, however, it must stay away from the practice of the past UMNO leadership led by its former president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak who according to him, had gone astray from the purpose of its formation in 1946.

"So we cannot be like UMNO now but we can be organised almost like UMNO because the members (of Bersatu) will be the Malays and natives of Sabah and Sarawak," he said.

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