

Umno not going to discipline Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno has not come to a stage where it will take disciplinary action against former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Umno information chief Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib said this was because Dr Mahathir had "immunity."

At one time Malaysia's first prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj also hurled all sorts of criticism against Dr Mahathir when he was prime minister, including through his writings in a local newspaper column but no disciplinary action was taken against him, he told *Bernama*.

Muhammad was asked to comment on a call by Kedah Umno Youth that the Umno leadership suspend Dr Mahathir's membership for his continuous attacks on the Government.

Kedah Umno Youth chief Mohd Rawi Abdul Hamid was reported to have said in Alor Star yesterday that Umno must take

action against Dr Mahathir because his criticisms have given rise to many controversies.

Meanwhile, Umno executive secretary Brig-Jen (Rtd) Datuk Husainay Hashim said the position of Dr Mahathir in several Government related agencies and companies was not on the agenda of the Umno supreme council meeting here on Thursday.

However, council members could raise the issue for discussion, he said.

He added that while the spat between the former prime minister and his successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, was not on the agenda, the issue had lately become a topic of discussion among many people and in the media.

"Every party matter will be discussed at the meeting. The issue of Tun (Dr Mahathir) has always been there, but things have lately developed. Umno cannot run away from discussing it," he said.

Husainay had been asked to comment on a report in a Malay daily that Dr Mahathir's position as adviser in several Government agencies and companies would be brought up at the meeting, which would be chaired

by Abdullah, who is also Umno president.

"While his position (as adviser) is not specifically on the agenda of the meeting, anyone can raise it and it will be discussed, if raised," Husainay said.

"Normally, that's the way it is in the supreme council."

The former prime minister is currently an advisor to Petronas, Proton and the Langkawi Development Authority (Lada), among others.

Several supreme council members, including Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid and Entrepreneurial and Cooperatives Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin had called on the council to discuss the matter.

Several other council members, including Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik and Datuk Dr Norraesah Mohamad had, however, reportedly said the matter was best left to Abdullah to decide.

An aide of the former prime minister said Dr Mahathir would not be making any comment at the moment on the newspaper report.