



De Meo's exit changes nothing for Alpine F1 team, Briatore says

Companies Renault SA Follow MONTREAL, June 15 (Reuters) - The departure from Renault of chief executive Luca de Meo changes nothing for the French carmaker's Alpine Formula One team, de facto principal Flavio Briatore told Reuters on Sunday.

Renault announced Luca De Meo was leaving shortly after the newspaper Le Figaro reported he will take over the leadership of the luxury group Kering.

Briatore, a title-winning boss of the Benetton and Renault F1 teams, returned to Formula One a year ago as executive adviser to De Meo and has been running the team since Oliver Oakes resigned as principal.

Briatore has denied being tasked to improve the team's performance prior to selling it. Alpine are currently last of the 10 teams.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing," Briatore said when asked after the Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal what De Meo's departure changed for the team.

"Nothing changed for me. Not for me or the team. And congratulations to Luca, new job," he said.

Alpine will compete with Mercedes power units next season after Renault decided last September to end engine production at its Viry-Chatillon factory outside Paris.

The team, whose investors include Hollywood actor Ryan Reynolds and NFL stars Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce, are currently alone in using Renault power units.

De Meo said last October that Renault were spending up to 250 million euros (\$289 million) a year on engine production while buying in from another manufacturer would cost less than \$20 million.

(\$1 = 0.8662 euros)

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