

Mahathir tells Taib: Learn from history
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Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad today dropped a big hint to Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud: 'Learn from history' in deciding when to step down.

In his trademark cryptic style, Mahathir avoided giving a direct answer on whether or not Taib should stay, preferring to make a reference to losses the BN suffered as a result of state leaders refusing to quit.

"There was one MB who insisted he should continue, and lost the whole state. If we learn from history, we won't do it again," he said at a press conference after launching an Islamic tourism conference.

Mahathir did not specify the menteri besar he was referring to, though he could have been pointing at Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, who helmed Terengganu from 1974 till 1999.

PAS took the state in the 1999 general election, with its current president Abdul Hadi Awang installed as menteri besar.

Another former menteri besar who could pass as Mahathir's example is Dr Mohamed Khir Toyo, who held the post in Selangor from 2000 till 2008, when the state was taken by Pakatan Rakyat.

Mahathir was less inclined to comment on the possible outcome of the Saturday's Sarawak state election, simply shrugging when asked about the possibility that Pakatan could deny BN a two-thirds majority.

"I think BN can win," was all he volunteered, despite several questions posed to him.

On last night's announcement by self-exiled blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin on his statutory declaration (SD) made in 2008, Mahathir reprimanded Raja Petra, or RPK as he is widely known, for having made the allegations in the first place.

Mahathir implied that Raja Petra had been irresponsible for publishing allegations without verifying their authenticity.

"I am a blogger myself... if people don't believe us, then what's the point of blogging?" he said.

In an interview telecast by TV3 and a few other channels last night, RPK (right) said he had never implicated Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his wife Rosmah Mansor in the murder of Mongolian Altantuya Shaariibuu, and that his SD was based on information given by people in whom he no longer believed.

In an exclusive interview with TV3 in Perth, Australia, RPK said the information was fed to him by people who were "connected" to a few politicians, including PKR de facto chief Anwar Ibrahim.

He also said that the individuals had pressured him to file his SD, with the aim of preventing

Najib - who was then deputy prime minister - from taking over from then Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

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