

Don to Mahathir: Look who's talking
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Constitutional law expert Abdul Aziz Bari has hit back at former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamed for having done 'far worse' to the institution of the royalty while in power.

Mahathir had said that Abdul Aziz' recent remarks on matters involving the Selangor royalty were "contrary to eastern moral values".

NONE"Ehhh....look who's talking? Mahathir said I was disrespectful to the rulers, immoral. Is he all right?" asked Abdul Aziz (left), a law professor at the International Islamic University, in an email to Malaysiakini.

He noted that all anyone needs to do is to compare his remarks with Mahathir's words and actions in 1983 and 1993 about the monarchy.

The truth, he said, would then be self-evident about who has been truly "disrespectful" of the rulers.

"In 1983, he pushed a constitutional amendment to bypass the Agong so that he could make laws without the signature of the paramount ruler, and transferred the power to declare an emergency from the Agong to the prime minister. Those amendments led to a crisis," said Abdul Aziz.

"In 1993, he wanted to remove the rulers' immunity and make them subject to a special court following the beating up of a hockey coach by Sultan Mahmood Iskandar of Johor. This also led to a crisis."

mahathir responses to suaram report 02On both occasions, Mahathir (right) had organised nationwide rallies to explain the intended changes.

"But wait.....two years ago he said it was OK for the palace to help Umno to get rid of (then menteri besar Muhammad) Nizar (Jamaluddin in Perak, following the collapse of the Pakatan Rakyat government).

"And early this year, he cheekily said he had never taken away the powers of the sultan in the matter of the Selangor (state secretary's) appointment, after the sultan said he no longer had the power."

Faced with open attacks against his character and professional credibility, the law expert is mulling including Mahathir among those he plans to sue.

"Depending on what my lawyer Hanipa Maidin has to say, I think we need to include Mahathir as well, given what he said that was printed on the front page of Utusan Malaysia," he explained.

Letter of demand

A letter of demand is likely to be sent out to all parties this week - apart from Mahathir, the recipients could include Utusan, other media organisations and Senator Ezam Md Noor.

NONEThe action comes after Umno, Utusan and certain NGOs attacked his comments on a recent statement by Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah over the controversy involving the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) and welfare NGO Harapan Komuniti.

Jais enforcement officials had conducted an 'inspection' of the NGO's 'thanksgiving dinner' in a church hall in Damansara Utama on Aug 3, saying their action was based on allegations that the group was involved in the conversion of Muslims.

Twelve Muslims were subsequently investigated over their presence at the multi-racial dinner, but the sultan decreed that no action would be taken against any party as there was 'insufficient evidence' of proselytisation. At the same time, the ruler upheld Jais' action.

After Abdul Aziz questioned the sultan's intervention in favour of Jais, Utusan campaigned against the academic for purportedly going against the institution of the royalty.

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