

**Umno rep gets bashing for attacking Utusan
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Utusan Malaysia's former boss Zainuddin Maidin has taken a swipe at Umno assemblyperson Ali Mazat for attacking the party mouthpiece for its reporting on the Johor Housing Bill row.

"An elected representative who is not sensitive to the feelings of the people and only wants to serve the royalty, in whatever circumstances, cannot feel the hurt of the people..."

"This is the character of the assemblyman who the people of Bukit Permai have elected," Zainuddin added in his blog.

Terming its reports as "provocation", Ali Mazat (right) had called on the Umno-owned daily to apologise to the Johor palace for its reports questioning the Housing and Real Property Bill 2014.

Ali also chided the media for publishing "irresponsible, seditious and provocative" statements to tarnish the image of the state government and the sultan.

However, Zainuddin said if Utusan Malaysia did not publish the "brave" views and opposition to the bill, there would not have been drastic amendments to the bill to limit the sultan's role.

"How great the sultan's power in intervening in state administrative affairs can be felt by those who read the amendments to the bill," added the former information minister.

The controversy over the Johor bill was first reported by Malaysiakini and subsequently picked up by Utusan Malaysia as well as other dailies.

The amended version of the bill was passed by the Johor state assembly on Monday.

How did MB agree?

Meanwhile, Zainuddin, who is also known as Zam, congratulated Menteri Besar Mohamed Khaled Noordin on the amendments.

He also lauded the menteri besar for finding a swift and wise resolution to the crisis.

"At least the people feel that their voices have been heard and respected," added the close ally of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had also criticised the bill.

However, Zainuddin (left) said he was puzzled how the menteri besar had agreed to the bill being tabled in its original form.

"Were there no objections from the state exco or advice from the state legal adviser? Do all of them think and act like Ali Mazat?" he asked.

Meanwhile, two academicians also came forth to back Utusan's reporting.

Universiti Teknologi Mara's (UiTM) former Communications and Media Studies dean Prof Adnan Hashim was reported by Utusan Malaysia as saying that the daily acted within the laws, using a proper channel to voice dissent, while not challenging the institution of the sovereignty of the constitutional monarchy.

The same article also quoted former cabinet minister and Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM) president Rais Yatim as saying the Umno-owned daily had reported fairly to inform the people.

"Utusan Malaysia acted nobly. It was others who were more harsh and extreme about the Johor Housing and Property Board Bill," Rais said was quoted as saying.

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