

Utusan: Mahathir has always been provocative
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Umno-owned newspaper Utusan Malaysia today brushed off former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's criticism of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, saying the veteran politician has always been "provocative".

"Mahathir, like other citizens, have a right to voice his views be it good or bad.

"Since he began in politics, that has always been his style - to criticise, give ideas and create provocations," said the newspaper under its editorial pseudonym Awang Selamat.

It added that even during Mahathir's tenure as prime minister, he was not spared of criticism from Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, the first prime minister of Malaysia.

The daily, in its weekend edition Mingguan Malaysia today, then went on to laud Najib for remaining calm on the stinging attacks.

"The prime minister has proven he has a good track record in handling criticism from leaders, including Mahathir," it said.

The newspaper also commended the cautious response of other Umno leaders, warning that any excessive rebuttal may cause a split in the party.

'An emperor with no clothes'

In a stinging blog posting last Monday, Mahathir likened Najib to an emperor with no clothes and bombarded him with a slew of criticisms over his policies.

Met by journalists the same day, Mahathir described Najib as "soft" and often silent on important issues.

"Najib is leading a country with a political landscape that is far more challenging, compared with the past eras.

"Therefore, he should be supported based on several factors, including his administration's performance that has not been disappointing, including his management of the MH17 crisis," Mingguan Malaysia said.

The newspaper also warned that withdrawing support for Najib, as Mahathir had done, was not a solution as other quarters may take advantage of the situation.

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