

Dr M's men trade notes on Najib's poor PR
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Since Dr Mahathir Mohamad went public with his criticism of Najib Abdul Razak, two of the former prime minister's strongmen have consistently trained their guns on the current prime minister.

Zainuddin Maidin and A Kadir Jasin, both senior newsmen, have also shared their thoughts on the recent controversy surrounding Najib playing golf with US President Barack Obama in Hawaii as severe floods hit Malaysia.

After coming under fire for what Najib later described as "golf diplomacy", he promptly returned to visit the affected areas.

Zainuddin (left), the former top editor of Utusan Malaysia, lamented on the poor response of the prime minister's communication unit in handling the crisis.

In his blog today, he posted a response from Kadir, who was the former New Straits Times group chief editor, to him on this matter.

Kadir had agreed with Zainuddin, who is popularly known as Zam, that the communication unit should have acted swiftly to issue a statement.

Flow of information is important

"But I am certain you know who heads this unit and what are their expertise in the issue of nerve war," he told his longtime friend.

Kadir recalled that he and several senior journalists had met with Najib before he became prime minister, and one of the things mentioned was the importance in handling the flow of information.

He also reminded Zainuddin of editors meeting with Mahathir when the latter became prime minister.

"Behind the curtains, we were allowed to discuss and debate openly. We agreed and disagreed (then)," Kadir (right) said.

As for Najib, the veteran newsman pointed out that the current prime minister has a battalion of officers and media advisers, including those from overseas.

"Perhaps because there are too many and they are loyal to and fearful of various quarters, there is no consensus on how to deal with a problem or crisis," he said.

Kadir also claimed that editors and journalists no longer have "absolute power" and

confided in him that they are forced to “bow to many wahyu (orders from above)”.

“Imagine if not all the orders favour the PM. What if there are enemies within (api dalam sekam?” he said.

Najib is often lambasted for relying too much on his advisers, whom critics in Umno claim are leading him in the wrong direction.

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