Dr M unperturbed about possibly irking Najib
MalaysiaKini.com
Jan 16, 2015

He will turn 90 this year. But his advanced age has not diminished the man's influence nor potential to dismantle political careers.

And speculation is rife that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is the latest to fall on the long-reigning former PM's crosshairs.

Recently, Dr Mahathir Mohamad - who has been critical of the current administration - cautioned Umno against political dynasties.

This appeared to be an obvious swipe at Najib, whose father was once party president and the nation's second prime minister.

However, Mahathir denied Najib was his prime target, but added he could not care less whose feathers he had ruffled.

"I did not say anything about Najib. I made a general statement.

"If anyone felt slighted, that is their problem," he said in his latest blog posting.

It is often said that Najib's lineage had spurred the PM's meteoric rise in Umno.

However, detractors say this lineage is the very reason the prime minister is allegedly out of touch with the grassroots.

Pot calling kettle?

Meanwhile, Mahathir said he was merely reminding Umno that family connections should not influence or determine the choosing of leaders.

"I cannot understand why I am wrong to state anyone who is qualified and loves Umno deserves to be elected for all posts," said the former premier.

Ironically, Mahathir too has a political heir in Umno in the form of Kedah Menteri Besar Mukhriz Mahathir.

And the former Umno president of two decades has been accused of attempting to engineer his son's ascension in the party.

But Mahathir argued that Mukhriz' case was different.

"I have forbidden my son from chasing positions in Umno unless elected by the leaders and

not family," he said.

Mahathir was responding to Umno leader Mohd Puad Zarkashi who said that it is not easy for political dynasties to take shape in the party now.

The latter pointed out that the Umno constitution has been amended so that it is not the small number of delegates at the party's annual meet who elect leaders, but the 146,000 delegates to the divisional meetings.

Apart from Najib and Mukhriz, there is another political scion in the upper echelons of Umno.

Vice-president Hishammuddin Hussein is also in the running for the prime minister's post.

Currently overseeing the defence portfolio, Hishammuddin is Najib's cousin and the son of third prime minister Hussein Onn.

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