

Najib must answer Dr M's questions, says Khairy

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By Adrian Wong

With former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad unleashing his most vitriolic attack on his successor Najib Razak this week, Umno Youth Chief Khairy Jamaluddin appears to be content trying to please both sides.

Khairy said given Mahathir's great influence among the people, ignoring what he has written on his blog is "not an option".

Therefore, Najib himself has to answer to the issues raised by his predecessor, even though these questions have purportedly been replied and answered before, he said.

"For the former prime minister, we have to listen and value what he has written.

"We need to answer what Mahathir wrote. We cannot stick our heads in the sand like an ostrich and hope the problem goes away. That's not the right way," he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur.

"We can explain the issues, but in my view, the most effective way is for the PM himself to provide the explanations," he said. "I think that is what Mahathir wants".

Nevertheless, the Oxford graduate stressed Umno Youth and the cabinet have thrown their support behind Najib.

"As a minister and Umno Youth chief, we are confident in the leadership of Najib as PM and president of Umno," he said.

When asked to comment on Mahathir's statement that BN and Umno will lose in the 14th general election if Najib continues to lead, he said, "We do not agree."

He admitted that the government is going through a "difficult time", especially with the implementation of goods and services tax (GST), and some people are unsatisfied and upset.

Will it affect chances in next GE?

But even so, Khairy said people should not conclude that BN and UMNO will be defeated.

"But at the same time, we should not lose the battle of perception.

"Hence, we need to deal with issues raised by Mahathir. If we ignore and do not handle it, we will lose the battle of perception, which will come out with a bad result in the general election," he added.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Zahid Hamidi (right) pointed out that when Mahathir was at the helm, he asked for absolute loyalty from his followers.

"In his time, he urged total loyalty from ministers, from supreme council members, from UMNO members," he said, adding that he "reserves other comments".

Mahathir in his blog stated that nobody trusts Najib now as the PM has not been able to answer a slew of allegations against him.

He also said it may cause Umno and BN will be defeated in the next general election, unless Najib steps down.

Thus far, no minister or any high-ranking UMNO leader have come forward to defend Mahathir.

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