

## **SPDP tells Mahathir to lay off Najib**

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**By Joseph Tawie**

Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) wants Dr Mahathir Mohamad to lay off the current Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

SPDP is the latest party in the State BN to have expressed its open support to Najib who is now under heavy attack by several critics, particularly Mahathir, who wants him to step down to save BN and Umno.

SPDP president Tiong King Sing ( said in a statement today that former premier Mahathir put Malaysia on the world map. "But he did not look after his own house quite well."

Mahathir and other critics must not just run Najib down and overlook the successes he had had chalked up since becoming prime minister in 2009, Tiong added.

"I am saddened to see the collision of Mahathir and Najib because if their confrontation is not diffused, the people will suffer," he warned, advising the former prime minister to work with Najib instead of condemning him.

Tiong (left), who is the MP for Bintulu, said among the prime ministers he had served as a Member of Parliament, Najib was the one most willing to listen to the people's problems and most importantly promised and fulfilled his pledges to help them.

Mahathir ignored the plight of Chinese and mission schools despite the tremendous contribution these schools had rendered to nation building, he said.

"I can still remember very well in my first term as an MP, I raised the issues of Chinese and Mission schools to Mahathir, but he said these schools are private schools and the government need not give them grants.

"Then I met Najib in 2008 when he was still the defence minister to discuss the same issues, he told me that he wanted to help but he was not in the position to approve government grants for these schools," Tiong recalled.

When Najib became prime minister, he went to see him again about the issues affecting the Chinese and mission schools, and he assured him that he would look into the matter.

"The following year, he approved RM100 million for the Chinese schools and RM50 million for mission schools every year from the time he became prime minister," said Tiong, pointing out that it clearly showed Najib was willing to help people irrespective of their race and creed.

Commenting on the 1Malaysia Development Bank (1MDB), Tiong said that the critics

should allow Najib to clear the air over allegations they hurled at the fund as he had instructed the auditor-general to carry out an investigation.

He said that he could not agree with Mahathir's statement that supporting Najib meant supporting the accumulated debts of RM42 billion.

"Let the auditor-general investigate first and we shall wait for the report. There may be some weaknesses with 1MDB during its initial stage.

"Najib is serious to resolve the allegations made by the people against 1MDB," he added.

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