

Mahathir challenges Najib to public debate

MalaysiaKini.com

May 16, 2015

By Zulaikha Zulkifli

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has voiced his readiness to debate his successor Najib Abdul Razak on a number of burning issues.

With a smirk on his face, Mahathir added that he, too, was a capable debater.

“I have some ability in debates. If you want to debate, okay lah,” said Mahathir, to loud cheers and applause from some a 2,000-member audience.

He said this when asked whether he is prepared to debate with Najib during a forum in Ipoh this afternoon organised by Gopeng Umno division.

Meanwhile, at a separate function in Klang earlier today, Najib vowed to continue as prime minister and party president, arguing that it was not unusual for leaders to face challenges.

“Tun Dr Mahathir faced even more tests. He was tested when Umno was banned in 1987. The Team A (and) Team B fight, remember that?” he told Selangor Umno members and supporters at a gathering organised by the party’s former elected representatives.

“What did Dr Mahathir say then? ‘Even if it is by one vote, I am still prime minister.’

“Which means I can use the same principle... So long as I have the support of the party, I will serve as president. So long as I have the support of the people, I will continue to serve,” he was quoted as saying by the Malay Mail Online.

Najib was reportedly speaking to a full-house crowd of Selangor Umno members and supporters at the Klang Executive Club’s ballroom, who cheered him on.

Mahathir has relentlessly attacked Najib on, among others, the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal, the Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) and the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

In his most vicious attacks yet, Mahathir last month called on Najib to step down lest he drags Umno down with him.

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