

## **Najib: I too could be longest serving PM but...**

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**By Alyaa Azhar**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad continued to trade barbs.

While the former premier reiterated that Najib should step down, the latter took a swipe at the former premier stating that he was able to remain in power for more than two decades because of the Umno constitution.

Speaking at an event organised by the Umno Veterans Club in Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur today, Najib stressed that he did not wish to tread the same path.

He pointed out that he was the first party president elected after the Umno constitution was amended.

The amendment saw the total number of delegates eligible to vote increased and the quota system abolished.

"Previously, only 2,600 people in Kuala Lumpur will vote for the president. (Sixty nominations) are needed to challenge the president," said Najib.

"Do you think it's easy to do so? No way. That's why Mahathir managed to stay for 22 years," he added.

### **Dr M's time had problems too**

Najib said he too could remain as the longest-serving prime minister, but opted to be chosen through democratic means.

"Since I was chosen democratically, why must I be disturbed? Why must I resign from my post?"

"I will continue this fight for the party's interests," thundered Najib to the crowd of about 300 people.

As he continued to hit out at Mahathir for having "many more problems" during his tenure as prime minister.

"It's not like there were no problems then. There were many, it's just that I don't want to mention. Too many.

"Why must we wash our dirty linens in public? It's only detrimental for us.

"We should defend our party, not destroy it. If we have a problem, we rectify it and find a way to solve it," he said.

### **Najib all for Vision 2020**

Meanwhile, Najib said he had many more duties to deliver, such as realising Vision 2020.

"Even though it was Mahathir who inspired Vision 2020, I don't mind it because it was a good vision.

"But whatever that I believe is not suitable, I will not implement. Although he does not agree with (cash aid) BR1M, I think it's good because people can use the money to buy rice, milk and sugar.

"At least the poor can receive assistance from the government. We shouldn't focus on mega projects only," he said, in an obvious dig at Mahathir who is known to have a penchant for mega projects,

Meanwhile, the premier also said that he had joined politics to continue the struggle left by his father, Malaysia's second prime minister, the late Abdul Razak Hussein.

"If my father was the country's father of development, I am determined to not only continue his struggle, but to bring the people to a higher level.

"That's why whatever policy I have introduced as prime minister, it is not far from the party's principles," he said, pointing out that it was he who upgraded ITM to university status when he was education minister and increased the university's enrolment.