

**Dr M: Najib's afraid to lose, unlike me**

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Unlike the Umno leadership crisis in 1987 that had split the party apart, former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the situation is now "different" as party president Najib Abdul Razak is allegedly afraid of a challenge.

"1987? But that was different. That was a challenge within the party and that was democratic.

"Even though I nearly lost, I allowed the challenge (from Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah)," he said when asked on the worst-case scenario on the ongoing feud between Najib and Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin.

Despite having amended Umno's constitution to allow more delegates to elect the party's top leadership, Mahathir claimed that Najib is still capable of influencing its outcome through controlling the 191 division leaders.

"This man (Najib) is not going to allow any challenge to him because he is afraid to lose," said Mahathir.

"The grassroots members must express their feelings. Division heads, as you can see, are not present (at the event)," said Mahathir during a press conference today after an event organised by Umno grassroots members from Kluang, Johor, and across Kedah.

The event held at the Islamic Arts Museum was organised in support of Mahathir's persistent call for Najib's resignation.

### **Najib's successor 'secondary'**

On whether the Umno Supreme Council can call for an emergency meeting any time after the Annual General Meeting (AGM) has concluded, Mahathir insisted that Najib can still ensure its members will vote against any motion to remove him.

This includes any motion to reinstate Umno elections - originally scheduled to be held end of next year - which Najib had announced will be postponed for 18 months, likely pushing the date until after the 14th General Elections due sometime in 2018.

"He (Najib) can also influence the delegates because he knows if there is a party election, there's a chance he might lose," Mahathir said.

Mahathir also insisted that any talk of Najib's successor is a "secondary" consideration to the primary objective of removing him.

"While he is still there, nothing can be done (to save Umno)," he claimed.

Mahathir, meanwhile, also claimed that it was "weird" (pelik) that the party's annual account was not tabled at this morning's main assembly.

"Maybe there are certain reasons that it was not tabled," he claimed.

At his recent talk in Kampung Baru, Mahathir had said his presence at the AGM today was mainly to see whether Najib had declared the RM2.6 billion donation supposedly meant for Umno's political funds.

When met at the sidelines of the Umno general assembly today, Umno treasurer-general Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah, however, simply dismissed the claim made by Mahathir.

"No need to bother about him; I have tabled (the report)," he said.

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