

**Dr M puts Najib on notice over 'crooked bridge'**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**June 30, 2010**

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad is now pressuring Premier Najib Abdul Razak's administration to revive the controversial crooked bridge project to replace the ageing Johor Causeway.

mahathir ikmal presidential lecture 290410In a posting on his blog today, Mahathir (right) suggested that Najib may have made a "deal" with his predecessor, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, not to revive the project.

"The question which many have posed to me - and I'm confident the majority of the public is asking - is why Najib, as the all-powerful prime minister, is unwilling to continue with the project?"

"Is he bound by a deal with the fifth prime minister? What is the status of this deal?" asked Mahathir.

He said that these questions had resulted in much speculation which could "sting" the premier's ears.

The crooked bridge was Mahathir's brainchild, designed to carry vehicles some 25 metres above the Tebrau Straits - allowing ships to pass beneath - before curving and descending to link up the existing causeway at the sea border between Malaysia and Singapore.

Traffic woes

Additionally, the project was meant to resolve traffic woes because the 80-year-old causeway was unable to cope with the current level of traffic.

macc official launch 240209 abdullah badawiAt the time, the project - once re-branded as the "scenic bridge" - reportedly cost RM620 million and could be completed within 36 months.

In 2006, after pledging to build the bridge despite opposition from Singapore, the project was scrapped by Abdullah (left), who claimed that the project was opposed by the public and there were legal implications involved.

Recently, the Johor sultan and government have reinvigorated talk of reviving the project, claiming that this was what the previous rulers and locals wanted.

Dr M presses his case

In his blog post, Mahathir cited these calls to press his case.

"I've never heard of anyone from Johor, except one person, agree with maintaining the causeway and the traffic jams in Johor Bahru because of it.

johor singapore new crooked bridge causeway 270106"Similarly, I've never heard of protests from Malaysians towards the project to replace the causeway," he said.

Mahathir also cited the booklet Water Talks - If only it could, published by the Singaporean government in 2003, which appended a letter by former Singaporean premier Goh Chok Tong stating that Singapore had no objection towards the crooked bridge.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/136008>