

**Dr M: PM stopped Najib from seeing me**  
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**Andrew Ong**

Dr Mahathir Mohamad made a startling claim today that his successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi recently thwarted a meeting between the ex-premier and deputy premier Najib Abdul Razak.  
MCPX

dr m national sovereignty talk 070508 03 "This is no longer a democratic Umno. I would like to say here - I don't know how I'm going to hurt people - I wanted to see Najib. He said he would come and see me," he said at a press conference in Putrajaya.

"He said he would first have to get the permission of the prime minister. Apparently he did not get permission. So until now, he has not seen me.

"It would be terrible to think that the prime minister does not trust his deputy. In my time, I trusted my deputy until he did something funny. Otherwise, I trust my deputy," said the former premier of Malaysia for 22-years.

Mahathir said that he had tried to set up the meeting with Najib "immediately after the general election" to discuss about current affairs.

"I'm concerned about what is happening in Umno," he said.

### **Winning uncontested**

Mahathir said that he had kept quiet on the matter as it was a private matter but decided to reveal it as he believed that there was an increased attempt to silence party dissidents now.

"But things are getting very serious now. People are not allowed to talk. I understand when Tengku Razaleigh (Hamzah) goes around to meet people at the branch level, Umno members were told not to attend.

mahathir pak lah and najib "What kind of party is this? You are only allowed to hear from one source. I think this is the cause of the losses of the last election. People were not allowed to speak and the leadership does not know what the people are thinking," he said.

On Abdullah's call for Umno divisions not to hold an extraordinary general meeting (EGM), Mahathir implied that it was a move to guarantee the former's re-election as Umno president and prime minister in the party polls in December.

umno party post polls quota "Without the EGM, you cannot change the rule on the 30 percent quota. If you cannot change the quota rule... there would be no divisions that would nominate anyone else other than Abdullah... He would win uncontested," he said.

Presently, to contest for the party presidency, a candidate needs nominations from 30 percent of the total 191 Umno divisions, or 58 divisions, to qualify.

The rule was put in place by Mahathir during his helm of Umno. However, he has become

the chief critic of the rule over the past few months.

Previously, Abdullah had called on Umno divisions not to hold the EGM's in view of the upcoming party general assembly in December.

### **'The hand-kissing has started again'**

Mahathir was also asked if he thought Umno divisional leaders had lost the momentum to hold EGM's and call for Abdullah to step down, to which the former replied in the affirmative by gesturing with his hand and simulating a plane plunging from the sky.

dr m national sovereignty talk 070508 01"I don't know why. People are so frightened. Even the ones that held the EGM did not (press on with their) demands - that the quota system should be revised and that the president should step down - no more! You don't hear anything anymore," he said.

To another question, Mahathir said he believed that there were efforts to persuade such Umno divisional leaders to stop attacking the party leadership.

"Yes of course, I think there were not attempts, but quite definitely they were persuaded to do otherwise. The hand kissing has started again," he said.

In the aftermath of the March 8 general election, many Umno veterans, including Mahathir, had blamed Abdullah for the ruling coalition's heavy defeat.

They had called on the prime minister to detail out a succession plan to allow his deputy Najib to take over as soon as possible.

At the same time, former party vice president Tengku Razaleigh has openly declared his intention to take on Abdullah for the top post in the coming party polls.