

**Mukhriz accuses Zaid of working for Pakatan
Malaysiakini.com
May 22, 2008
Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

More signs of a deepening Umno strife surfaced in the Dewan Rakyat today with controversial BN Jerlun member of Parliament Mukhriz Mahathir taking a bold swipe at fellow party member and MCPX de facto Law Minister Zaid Ibrahim.

Zaid, who during his winding-up speech on the royal address, was in the midst of speaking on government's effort to introduce judicial reform was interrupted by Mukhriz.

Mukhriz proceeded to accuse Zaid as a BN minister who was more keen on implementing opposition Pakatan Rakyat's agenda.

mukhriz pemuda umno 050906 think "Congratulations, minister as you have done well in realising the opposition's goals than that of your own party," was the beginning of Mukhriz's (right) tirade against Zaid, who is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department for legal affairs.

Following up on his caustic remarks, the rookie MP then questioned how a lawyer like Zaki Azmi could have leapfrogged over other more experienced judges to be appointed as the Court of Appeals president.

Zaki, a former lawyer for Umno, is known to be on close terms with Prime Minister and Umno president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

His appointment as appellate court president in December last year was controversial with various quarters questioning his capability to be impartial due to his past affiliation with Umno.

"And this person was recommended by your prime minister himself," Mukhriz said, causing a ruckus in the BN's side of the House.

Serious judicial reform

Zaid wasn't inclined to take Mukhriz's jibe lying down and in a subtle but immediate rebuke replied that "maybe the person who made this statement is not comfortable being in BN".

The de facto law minister, himself a former owner of one of the country's biggest law firms, was referring to the heated dispute between ex-PM and Umno president Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Abdullah that has led to the former quitting Umno in hope of de-stabilising the latter.

Party observers say Mahathir's move was made in order to trigger a mass exodus from Umno in order to put pressure on Abdullah to quit.

The former strongman's plan, however, has failed to take effect so far with only his one other son, Mokhzani Mahathir following him in exiting the party.

Mukhriz has stated his intention of staying on in Umno though he echoed his father's demand for Abdullah to step down.

zaid ibrahim at kl rotary club talk 051207 talking Zaid, (left) continuing with his winding-up speech, assured the opposition that the government was serious about reforming the judiciary.

He said one of the measures taken by the government was the establishment of the Judicial Appointments Commission.

The commission would make accountable the entire process of the appointment of judges including the prerogative of the prime minister to recommend candidates to the King.

"The prime minister cannot simply make decisions. He will have to accept the recommendations made by the commission. If he rejects the proposals by the commission, he must explain why," claimed Zaid.

He added that a bill to set up the commission would soon be introduced and expressed hope it would be accepted by the people.

ISA, SCC to be reviewed

Zaid also said that while the Internal Security Act would not be repealed despite pressure for the government to do so, certain sections of it would be reviewed.

"As a government that is sensitive towards the public's demand, it is open to enhancing and updating provisions under the ISA as well as other laws," said Zaid.

"Preventive detention is actually still needed in this country. However, there is the possibility of reviewing the Act in future," Zaid said, without giving a timeframe of when the review will take place.

He said that he, Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar and attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail have been tasked to review certain sections of the draconian law, which allows detention without trial.

But he did not specify which parts of the act were to be targeted.

royal police commission report 160505As for the long-awaited Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) bill, Zaid remained vague saying that while the government had drafted a substitute bill to the IPCMC - which is the Special Complaints Commission - this will be revised yet again.

He said this was the result of the SCC meeting fierce criticism for its supposed lack of enforcement powers and for being a 'watered down' version of the IPCMC.

The SCC bill was tabled last year but the government decided to withdraw after facing strong opposition.

Zaid said the government will take into consideration the concerns raised by various parties including the royal commission that had proposed the IPCMC when reviewing the SCC, he added.

The revised SCC bill will be tabled in Parliament later this year.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news//83297>