

**Mahathir, the 'happy blogger'**  
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**Andrew Ong**

Former premier turned active blogger Dr Mahathir Mohamad today revealed that he was happy to have turned to cyberspace to air his views.  
MCPX

chedet mahathir blog 210508"Now I'm glad I have my blog. At least I can say something," Mahathir told reporters during a press conference at his office in the Petronas Twin Towers today.

Mahathir said this when he repeated his now familiar complaint about how the present government and Umno leadership was silencing dissent.

He said that this practice was in contrast to his time as prime minister and Umno president, which he claimed allowed open criticism and allowed open contest within the party.

Earlier, Mahathir made another passing mention about his blog when speaking about popularity in politics and how there was bribery in elections.

"The fact that I won (elections), it doesn't mean that I have power. I think I was popular. I think even now, after you retire you can still walk around, people come up and thank you and things like that. Of course I don't like to talk about that because it means I'm trying to promote myself.

"But I don't seem to be unpopular when I meet people. If you care to read my blog, so many people make comments. Some were adverse comments, but majority are quite supportive of what I said," he said.

On May 1, Mahathir started his own blog chedet.com which refers to his old pen-name in his 1970s column in Utusan Malaysia.

Since its inception, chedet.com is arguably fastest growing blog in Malaysia with more than two million hits in the short span of two months.

## **Sackings**

On the dismal amount of people leaving following his footsteps and leaving Umno, Mahathir reiterated that most people supportive of the idea were crippled with fear.

mahathir pc 260608 05"They were frightened. If you follow me, you lose a lot of things and come under pressure. People have had their positions (taken away) like Sanusi Junid, who was removed as International Islamic University president," he said.

To another question, Mahathir said he was not disappointed that his youngest son Mukhriz did not leave Umno.

"He has his own strategy. I don't use force, even in my family," he added.

Mahathir said that he is unlikely to face the same predicament as Sanusi, a staunch Mahathir-loyalist, because he was more high-profile.

"I think it is because a lot of people talk about my jobs, so the government has not taken any action. If they could do it quietly, I think they would.

"But I have such a high profile. It may not look good for the government," said Mahathir, who had previously said that he doesn't care if he is sacked from his posts.

Currently, Mahathir is an advisor to oil and gas giant Petronas, national carmaker Proton, the Langkawi Development Authority and the Tioman Island Development Authority.

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