

Dr Mahathir : Zaid gone, Najib to inherit 'headaches'
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The 'headaches' left behind by sacked Umno leader Zaid Ibrahim will be inherited by premier-in-waiting Najib Abdul Razak, said Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Commenting on Zaid's expulsion, Mahathir took another swipe at Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for making a wrong choice.

mahathir dinar conference 240707 distress" This is the man who was held in high esteem by Umno president Abdullah so that from among hundreds of Umno leaders of sorts, he chose Zaid, a dubious character who could not be accepted even by his own Kota Bahru division and was not made a candidate in the 2008 elections. It is known that Zaid was in Perth, Australia, during the elections.

"Seeing Zaid's behaviour towards Umno lately, the rumours that he was supporting the opposition against the Umno/Barisan Nasional candidate in the March 2008 elections must have been true," he stated in his blog posting.

"Now Zaid has left his benefactor with controversial issues which can only undermine the support for Umno/BN whatever his benefactor may try to do. And Najib will inherit these headaches when he takes over.

"It seems that I am not the only one to make wrong choices," the 82-year-old statesman added with his trademark sarcasm.

Zaid was sacked from Umno on Tuesday after being seen in the company of opposition leaders and their events.

More recently, Zaid was seen at the opening of the PKR congress last Saturday. On Friday night, he had attended a DAP dinner in Penang.

Pak Lah to stay on as PM after March?

Meanwhile, Mahathir also touched on the rumours that Najib may not succeed Abdullah as prime minister in March as expected.

The grapevine has it that Abdullah is still interested in the post, he said.

"The nation is waiting for March 2009. They believe that it (the transition plan) will happen based on Abdullah's announcement that he will hand over the post to Najib.

"Abdullah also stated that he will not contest for the Umno presidency during the party polls next March. Following this, no division nominated Abdullah for president," he said.

Normally, Mahathir said the person who is Umno president becomes prime minister if BN wins an elections.

But this, he pointed out, is merely tradition. "With the confidence of a majority of Dewan Rakyat members, a person who is not Umno president or BN chairman can also become

prime minister."

Taking into account the attitude of many Umno leaders and members, Mahathir said the possibility of Abdullah remaining as prime minister is not impossible

"They (the leaders and members) will not oppose Abdullah because they are very comfortable with his leadership and the perks which they receive from him," he added.

People will hate Umno/BN

However, Mahathir warned, that Abdullah's continued presence at the top will stoke the people's hatred for Umno and BN.

"There will be political turmoil until the next general election and when the elections come, the people will reject Umno and BN.

"The people are not interested in the opposition parties but they have no choice. Umno has become a party led by many corrupt leaders. If Umno and BN win (in the polls) therefore those who will administer Malaysia are people who become the prime minister and minister through corruption.

"They will continue to practise corruption in the government to recover their 'investment' and more," he added.

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