

Dr M: We need Ibrahim Ali
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Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has lent support to Pasir Mas member of parliament Ibrahim Ali, who has come under pressure from PAS to resign his seat.

Speaking to reporters after delivering the keynote address at the Corporate Governance Summit in Kuala Lumpur today, Mahathir said it is important to have someone who is vocal on wrongdoing by both the opposition and parties in government.

"I think we need somebody like that - who is neutral, who is concerned only with good governance, who will criticise whoever, whether (they are in) the government or the opposition," he said.

"As an Independent, he is trying to project himself as somebody who is trying to comment on all the wrong things done by both sides."

Yesterday, Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat had [lashed out](#) at Ibrahim, telling him to resign from his parliamentary seat which he had bagged last year.

Nik Aziz, who is also the PAS spiritual leader, was responding to an article in a Malay tabloid quoting Ibrahim as saying that Nik Aziz is old and has failed to develop Kelantan.

"What is wrong with being old? What is the use of being young but a load of rubbish?" he had retorted.

"I asked him to resign as the Pasir Mas MP as he won the seat under PAS banner. When Pasir Mas PAS told him to step down, he should have done so."

Mahathir was of the view that Ibrahim (*left*) "owes something to PAS", but noted that the remarks were made in his capacity as an Independent MP.

"I think Ibrahim convinced PAS not to put up another candidate in Pasir Mas and let him (run as election) candidate... (but) he is not a member of PAS and he has not joined PAS," said Mahathir.

Asked whether Nik Aziz should step down, Mahathir said: "(He) has been the menteri besar for a long time, but as we all know Kelantan is the most backward state (in Malaysia)... so to a certain extent Nik Aziz is responsible for the backwardness of Kelantan and he has to accept that."

'Leaders for lifetime'

In other countries, Mahathir pointed out, leaders resign when they cannot deliver. In Malaysia, however, "you become a leader and you want to stay for a lifetime".

Mahathir said that he himself had made way for fresh leadership after helming the government for 22 years.

"Well I think he (Nik Aziz, *right*) has been there for a long time. I stepped down... I think people were getting fed-up with me so I stepped down. The problem with a comfortable

seat is that you don't want to get up at all,"he quipped.

Mahathir also commented on Ibrahim's suggestion that he (Mahathir) should be officially recognised as the government's adviser.

"That is his opinion... I am giving my advice through my blog and through my public speeches. I am the general adviser for the whole country. Whether you like my advice or not I don't care I will give my advice," he added.

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