

Ku Li: Dr M will air views regardless

By IAN MCINTYRE
ianm@thestar.com.my

GUA MUSANG: Umno veteran Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah believes Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will continue to air his views on the Government despite being criticised for it.

"It is his nature. Whether in Umno or outside the party, Dr Mahathir will still give his views, even if it hurts people. Whatever people say, it makes no difference as Dr Mahathir will speak his mind; and he does not apologise," said the former finance minister.

Tengku Razaleigh, however, stressed that he did not want to get involved.

"Firstly, I do not really know why he is unhappy with the Prime Minister. Also, I am no longer in the Government and I feel that I am in no position to advise," said Tengku Razaleigh, who became a political foe of Dr Mahathir after he challenged the former premier for the Umno president's post in the late 1980s.

He, however, felt that Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Dr Mahathir should meet to seek a way to end the discord.

"If I am put in a position where my predecessor criticises me, I will want to meet him. I will want to seek an explanation and also explain why I am doing certain things," Razaleigh said.

"After that, I will draw my own conclusion and look at the best approach for the country. We, at times, must be big hearted to accept criticism."

He said it was normal for a past leader to be critical, citing the late Tunku Abdul Rahman who espoused his views in the *As I See It* and *Looking Back* columns.

Asked about the opposition capitalising on the purported rift between the former and present, premiers, Tengku Razaleigh, describing PAS as being bankrupt of ideas, said it was trying to gain political mileage.

Meanwhile, the Johor Umno Youth issued a statement saying that Dr Mahathir's recent criticisms did not show his sincerity in wanting to achieve Vision 2020.

"There are better channels for Dr Mahathir to air his views than having roadshows," said its chief Razali Ibrahim.