

Dr Mahathir responds to points raised

I REFER to the Sunday Column "And who, really, is demonising whom?" (*New Sunday Times*, June 11).

I would like to point out several factual errors contained in the article:

- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not seek an appointment with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi while both leaders were in Tokyo attending the Nikkei Conference.

In fact, it was the opposite. Dr Mahathir was only informed by a third party that the Prime Minister was on the way to call on him 20 minutes before he was due to leave the hotel on May 26.

To this, Dr Mahathir agreed and the two leaders met for about 10 minutes before Dr Mahathir had to take his leave.

- Dr Mahathir did not invite the foreign Press to, in your words, "lambast Abdullah and Ms administration".

The Press conference on June 7 was called to announce the Perdana Leadership Foundation's Global Peace Forum to be held from June 20-22.

The foreign Press was there for that purpose.

However, as in all Press conferences, the foreign Press took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions on other matters.

- Individuals are free to give their views, opinions or advice to Dr Mahathir.

Many do that voluntarily. However, that does not make them "advisers".

In this case, as mentioned in the column, I would like to clarify that Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad does not hold any formal post as adviser to Dr Mahathir.

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(We have received many letters in support of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Because they express similar sentiments to the correspondence already published, we have decided to bring this subject to a close. — Editor)