

MPs slam Mahathir over claims of vote-buying

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FOR the second day in a row, the debate concerning former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed and his successor Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi spiced things up in the House.

Both Barisan Nasional and opposition MPs hit out at Dr Mahathir, many pointing out that his claims that he was purportedly a victim of money politics was his own fault.

A backbencher said Dr Mahathir should exit gracefully.

Datuk Mohd Sarit Yusoh (BN - Temerloh) stood up for Abdullah and said those who wanted to

give him advice should do it correctly and sincerely.

"If an incorrect or insincere advice is given, there is a possibility that he (Abdullah) might make a wrong decision," he said in debating the Budget.

"Give him a chance to prove himself, as he does not have a personal agenda but only the people's interest at heart."

Meanwhile, Datuk Mohd Alwi Che Ahmad (BN - Ketereh) said that when the curtain had fallen the best thing for an actor to do was to leave the stage gracefully.

"When it is your time to quit,

you should accept it and just quit," he said.

Mohd Alwi said retired leaders should not interfere in the present administration but should instead focus on social work that would benefit the community.

Tan Kok Wai (DAP - Cheras) said Dr Mahathir had become a victim of his own actions when he claimed that RM200 in bribes were given out during the elections.

"The people who stood up for him have now betrayed him. He has become a victim through his own doing," he added.

"When he was Prime Minister, he did not use his capacity to eliminate money politics and ensure the Anti-Corruption Agency acted without fear or favour."

Tan, however, called on Abdullah to get the ACA to investigate Dr Mahathir's claims as "it was a joke for Kedah Umno to investigate since as they were key players in ensuring Dr Mahathir's defeat."

On another issue, Datuk Lim Bee Kau (BN - Padang Serai) said something needed to be done to check the wastage of

public funds.

Pointing out that financial mismanagement was raised by the Auditor-General every year in his annual report, she said: "Who is monitoring the situation on the ground? If there is no specific agency, then maybe we should consider a committee to monitor the situation."

Datuk Ghazali Ibrahim (BN - Padang Terap) disagreed with Lim's suggestion, saying that although some departments had already explained the issues raised in the report these were not reflected in the report.