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'Dr M has no right to rap Najib'

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'UNWARRANTED': Former premier failed to address many issues during his administration, says Rahman

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FORMER premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has no right to admonish Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak over the Malaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) controversy.

Barisan Nasional strategic communications director Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan said this was because Dr Mahathir had failed to address issues that arose during his tenure as prime minister.

"There are a lot of questions surrounding Dr Mahathir's administration that need answering. So, he (Dr Mahathir) may not be the right person to pursue the agenda of replacing Najib.

"In fact, Dr Mahathir has no credibility and has no right to attack a democratically elected prime minister," he said yesterday.

Rahman, who is also urban well-being, housing and local government minister, said Dr Mahathir's attacks on Najib were unwarranted,

as the latter had instructed government agencies, including the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, to investigate IMDB.

"All the issues raised by Dr Mahathir are being investigated. The prime minister has given his commitment that the IMDB issue will be resolved soon.

"A lot of people forget that it was Najib who instructed government agencies to investigate the allegations against IMDB."

Rahman said he believed the current governing system provided the necessary check and balances to keep the country in "the right direction".

He said this following *New Straits Times*' interview with Tawfik Ismail yesterday, in which the latter was quoted as saying that Dr Mahathir had betrayed the trust of Malaysians with his unilateral actions during his time as prime minister.

Tawfik, the son of Malaysia's second deputy-prime minister, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman, had said Malaysians were now "paying" for the mistakes made during Dr Ma-

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hathir's administration.

In the interview, Tawfik had said Dr Mahathir had allowed Umno to be declared unlawful so that the party could be reconstituted to exclude and include certain personalities.

"He damaged the judiciary (during the Malaysian constitutional cri-

sis) and that is a big betrayal.

"Now, the judiciary cannot act as independently as it had before the late (former Lord President) Tun Salleh Abas' episode," Tawfik was quoted as saying.

Tawfik had also blamed Dr Mahathir for the recent toll hikes, say-

ing that the former premier had permitted and legitimised a "non-transparent way of running things".

"Whose fault is that? Who made the initial agreement between the government and concessionaires?" asked Tawfik, who is a member of a group of eminent Malays called G2S.

G2S had met with Dr Mahathir on two separate occasions, during which the former premier attempted to win the group's support in his fight against Najib.

Meanwhile, political analyst Associate Prof Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, from Universiti Utara Malaysia, said fundamental differences between G2S and Dr Mahathir prevented them from cooperating.

"Dr Mahathir wanted G2S to be on board in his struggle to bring down Najib by forming a strong third force (in the country's politics).

"But G2S saw that bringing down Najib would only affect the leadership and not bring change to the regime or government," Azizuddin said yesterday.

Azizuddin said while G2S was a group of prominent and moderate Malays who stood up against extremism, Dr Mahathir had close associations with Malay rights group Perkasa.

"These differences in approach will make cooperation between Dr Mahathir and G2S difficult."