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Dr M takes a dig at Musa for failed Vision 2020 remark

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PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has hit out at his former deputy Tun Musa Hitam in a sarcasm-laced salvo on his blog.

Dr Mahathir said his "very good friend, colleague, former Umno deputy president and deputy prime minister" had blamed him for the undoing of Vision 2020 due to his failure to groom successors.

"My first failure was Tun Musa Hitam himself. He could not wait for me to retire. So, he resigned after five years being with me as my deputy in a government his boys called the MM (Mahathir-Musa) Government.

"He believed that the Umno supreme council would throw me out and appoint him as president.

"The council decided to persuade him to return as DPM and deputy president. He came back as deputy president," Dr Mahathir wrote on chedet.cc yesterday.

His former deputy, claimed Dr Mahathir, had persuaded Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah - an "erstwhile rival and enemy" of Musa's - to contest for presidency against him.

Musa, he said, was prepared to be Umno deputy president and deputy prime minister under Tengku Razaleigh.

"These he did even though I overlooked his

bad faith and later appointed him as Special Envoy to the United Nations.

"In the contest for presidency, Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar, Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Tan Sri Rais Yatim sided with Tengku Razaleigh.

"I and (Tun) Ghafar Baba won. Then, I appointed all those who were not loyal to me as ministers in my Cabinet. One of them, Tun Abdullah, eventually was named my successor as prime minister.

"Far from choosing only loyalists, I chose those disloyal to me," said Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir said he believed in leadership by example.

"I must have set a bad example because those who succeeded me all failed to make a success of Vision 2020. I am to blame, of course.

"Dear Musa, thank you very much for pinpointing the cause of the failure of Vision 2020. You must have known this in 1986, long before the Vision.

"It must have been your foresight, which caused you to resign from the government I headed. So, no one can blame you. Your service to me and the nation will go down in history," he said.