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'Najib stronger now despite attacks'

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'DR M A SPENT FORCE': Former premier's allegations don't hold water, says blogger

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FORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has met his match in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, said blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin.

Raja Petra, in an opinion piece published online yesterday, said Dr Mahathir was losing his fight to oust Najib from office despite his constant attacks and allegations against the prime minister.

Describing Dr Mahathir as a "fighting cock", Raja Petra said the former loved controversy and had a penchant for picking fights with his most "hated" enemies.

"But above all else, more than anything in this world, what Dr Mahathir hates the most is losing. He must win at all costs, never mind what it takes to win, by fair means or foul.

"And that is what is happening today. Dr Mahathir is losing. And he just cannot take that. And Najib knows this.

"Hence, Najib knows the right buttons to push to upset Dr Mahathir. And every time Najib pushes these buttons Mahathir will *menting* (scold) and his heart would flutter," wrote the blogger.

Raja Petra said that while it took Dr Mahathir three years to oust former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi from office, the former had failed, time and again, to topple Najib from power.

"Najib is, in fact, stronger now than when Dr Mahathir's proxies first made their move on him two years ago.

"Dr Mahathir has been hammering away the IMDB issue for the last two years since 2014 and still Najib will not fall.

"Najib was supposed to have fallen a year ago, in July last year, but that did not happen.

"And it looks like it may never happen, never mind how hard Dr Mahathir keeps hammering the IMDB issue.

"Maybe Mahathir has not heard what Albert Einstein was supposed to have said: The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results."

Raja Petra said Barisan Nasional's victories in the Sarawak election, as well as the twin by-elections in Kuala Kangsar and Sungai



Datuk Seri Najib Razak

Besar, proved that Dr Mahathir's allegations against IMDB did not hold water.

"If the IMDB issue could not bring Najib down by now that means it is never going to bring him down.

"Dr Mahathir is worried that this may be the end for him. Realistically speaking, Dr Mahathir does not have the luxury of time, due to age and health issues, and it would need time for his Parti Pribumi party to prove itself — if it is ever going to be viable in the first place."

Raja Petra claimed that Dr Mahathir wanted to oust Najib after the former's son, Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, failed to win the Umno vice-president's post in the party election in 2013.

"But after that sneak attack (against IMDB), Najib consolidated and counter-attacked. Dr Mahathir (then) realised that the attacks needed to be covert, and not overt.

"And even more important would be that it must be seen that Umno wants Najib out. So Dr Mahathir needs people in Umno to attack Najib. If the opposition attacks Najib, then Umno would close ranks and rally behind Najib."

Citing Umno stalwart Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's rivalry with Dr Mahathir in the 1980s, Raja Petra said the latter reacted by setting up a new Umno party and disallowed his adversaries from joining.

"Najib, however, played a smarter game. Instead of doing what Dr Mahathir did back in 1987-1988, Najib pushed Dr Mahathir into a corner and trapped him there so that the old man would become so flustered and frustrated he himself would resign from Umno and join the opposition.

"Once Dr Mahathir does that, he would have committed *hara kiri* (ritual suicide) and would no

longer be a threat to either Najib or Umno."

Raja Petra said by resigning from Umno, Dr Mahathir had done precisely what Najib wanted him to do.

"That is why Najib remained very silent when he came under attack. Najib's critics say that Najib must be guilty if he was keeping quiet and says nothing. The truth is, silence is Najib's ally and Dr Mahathir's enemy."

He also said Parti Pribumi would not be able to mount a significant challenge against Barisan Nasional as it relied heavily on the opposition's support.

"The trouble is, Parti Pribumi is merely a political party, just like Semangat 46 before and PKR now. Umno, however, is more than just a political party. It is a Malay institution.

"And that is the difference between Umno and the other Malay parties or parties with a Malay support base.

"At least when Semangat 46 and PKR were formed, they managed to attract many Umno members and leaders.

"Parti Pribumi, however, is depending on opposition support. But then, there are seven main opposition parties also fishing in the same pond," he said.

Describing Dr Mahathir as a "spent force", Raja Petra said the veteran statesman would be considered a liability for Pakatan Harapan if he was allowed to join any opposition party.

"The opposition then announced that they were prepared to work or cooperate with Dr Mahathir if he were to first form his own party. This was the opposition's subtle way of getting rid of Dr Mahathir.

"If Dr Mahathir's new party does not work out, they can safely jettison it, just like what they did to Pas not too long ago," he said.

Raja Petra said Dr Mahathir's decision to resign from Umno meant that he was no longer a threat to the party.

"Knowing that attempting to topple Najib from within Umno is a lost cause, Dr Mahathir changed tactics and is now attempting to topple Najib from outside Umno, with the help of the opposition, like what Tengku Razaleigh tried and failed for eight years.

"Parti Pribumi has ensured that Umno would now close ranks against what is considered an external enemy.

"Even more important is the fact that Dr Mahathir, or Parti Pribumi, does not really have any issues to use against Umno."



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad