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# Dr M hits back at Musa

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## 'Speaking frankly does not mean speaking truthfully'

**PETALING JAYA:** Speaking frankly does not mean speaking truthfully, said ex-premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad who has slammed a book by his former deputy Tun Musa Hitam.

Musa, who was deputy prime minister from 1981 to 1986, dedicated a chapter of *Frankly Speaking* to Dr Mahathir's administration, calling it "an abject failure" with no suitable successor being groomed.

Dr Mahathir criticised the book, saying it blamed him for everything that has happened in Umno and the Government.

"Musa naturally does not blame himself for anything. He is as innocent as a newborn child. Which explains why he is so popular," he wrote on his blog *chedet.cc*.

According to Dr Mahathir, Musa had contested the Umno deputy president post against Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah - currently MP for Gua Musang, Kelantan, and former finance minister (1976-1984) and international trade and industry minister (1984-1987).

"Musa came to me to seek my support for his bid. I am prepared to swear on the Quran that he did this," he said.

Dr Mahathir also countered Musa's claim that he "demanded absolute loyalty", citing many events leading up to Musa's resignation as deputy prime minister and Umno deputy president.

"I was annoyed as I thought he was the right person to succeed me eventually as PM. I did not expect to be Prime Minister for 22 years at that time. No one did. Certainly not Musa," he said.

Despite Musa being "obviously not loyal" to him at all, Dr Mahathir said, he accepted

Musa's decision to return as deputy president of the party.

He went on to detail Musa's eventual acts of "even greater disloyalty", such as persuading Tengku Razaleigh to contest the Umno presidency at the next party election while going for the deputy presidency himself.

"If they won he would be deputy prime minister to Tengku Razaleigh.

"His assertion now that he would not be in Tengku Razaleigh's Cabinet is something new. It is absurd," said Dr Mahathir.

"Despite all these, I did not take any action against him. When he did not join Tengku Razaleigh's Semangat 46, I appointed him special envoy to the United Nations with ministerial rank.

"Does this sound like a man who cannot and could not tolerate anything but absolute personal loyalty as alleged by Musa?" he added.

"Najib now talks about loyalty to the institution of president of Umno. He does not allow contests for president as I did when Musa and Tengku Razaleigh challenged Ghafar and me," he said, taking a swipe at Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba was deputy prime minister from 1986 to 1993.

"Anyone not fully supporting him, be they Ministers or civil servants were removed or transferred or medically retired. He is not tolerant as I was.

"I reserve the right to criticise his intolerance of opposition," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Musa should cite events or documents, including news reports of the time, if he wanted to be frank.