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### Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Petronas



- **2003** Dr Mahathir is appointed Petronas adviser following his retirement as Prime Minister.
- **Dec 1, 2013** Dr Mahathir announces that he was resigning as adviser following advice by doctors to "slow down" due to his hectic daily routine.
- **Dec 3, 2013** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak expressed his hope that Dr Mahathir would "reconsider" his decision to resign.
- **Dec 5, 2013** Dr Mahathir says he is rethinking his decision to quit as Petronas adviser, and eventually stays on.
- **Aug 18, 2014** Dr Mahathir announces that he was withdrawing his support for Najib as his criticisms of the Prime Minister had supposedly fallen on deaf ears.
- **March 4, 2016** Dr Mahathir teams up with more than 50 political figures and civil society leaders to initiate a citizens' declaration to demand the removal of Najib as Prime Minister.



## A loss of perks and face for Dr M

**PETALING JAYA:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's removal as Petronas adviser may not hurt him too much financially – after all, he had wanted to step down before – but it could deprive him of many perks and leave him embarrassed.

The adviser received an allowance of between RM12,000 and RM16,000 a month, which would probably be small change for a man of Dr Mahathir's stature.

However, he also has a secretary and support staff who help with his duties at his futuristic office on the 86th floor.

In fact, one could say he was holding the highest office in town, right at top of the Petronas Twin Towers, with doors that looked like something out of Star Wars movie.

Even the Petronas board meetings are held on 85th floor.

The office of Petronas adviser is a prestigious post reserved only for a former prime minister. Dr Mahathir was appointed in 2003. The third Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn, was the adviser before Dr Mahathir.

There has been speculation that Dr Mahathir was also allowed to use the Petronas jet when he requested for it during the period when Tan Sri Hassan Merican was Chief Executive Officer in the early 90s. This apparently stopped when Tan Sri Shamsul Azhar Abbas was made CEO/president.

There is speculation that Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi may now be appointed as adviser in place of Dr Mahathir.

That would be a slap in the face of the outgoing adviser as he had been instrumental in removing Abdullah as prime minister, too.

Meanwhile, former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir said the sacking was aimed at humiliating his father.

Mukhriz said his father had actually tendered his resignation letter in 2013 but the Government had then rejected it.

"Now PMO wants to humiliate him by firing him," he said.

# Dr M sacked from Petronas

Cabinet unanimous in decision to remove former premier

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**PETALING JAYA:** The axe fell on Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad when the Cabinet made a unanimous decision to remove him as adviser to Petronas following his move to initiate a citizens' declaration demanding the ouster of Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The move by the Government now raises questions over the status of the former Prime Minister's other appointed positions – as chairman of national carmaker Proton and the Perdana Leadership Foundation.

The Prime Minister's Office, in a statement, said the Cabinet in its meeting yesterday discussed the actions of Dr Mahathir, particularly in launching the declaration along with opposition leaders last week.

The declaration, the statement said, aimed to topple the democratically-elected Government led by the Prime Minister, and is therefore against the law and the Federal Constitution.

"The Cabinet decided that, since Tun Mahathir is no longer supporting the current Government, he should no longer hold any position related to the Government.

"Therefore, the Cabinet today agreed unanimously to terminate the appointment of Tun Mahathir as adviser to Petronas," the statement said.

The move by Dr Mahathir last week in initiating the declaration with a group of more than 50 politicians including from the opposition as well as civil society leaders led to



#### PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE STATEMENT

### TUN MAHATHIR'S TERMINATION FROM PETRONAS

The Cabinet today discussed the actions of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, particularly in launching the so-called "Citizen's Declaration" with opposition leaders last week.

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calls by a number of Umno supreme council members and divisions for the Government to strip him of his positions in government linked companies and bodies.

Dr Mahathir was appointed to the Petronas position after he stepped down as Prime Minister in 2003.

In December 2013, he announced that he had resigned due to advice from his doctors that he needed to slow down.

Najib urged Dr Mahathir to rethink his decision and Dr Mahathir agreed to stay on.

Dr Mahathir was appointed as Proton chairman on May 16, 2014, two years after DRB Hicom bought

a 42.7% stake in Proton from Khazanah Nasional Bhd for RM1.29bil.

Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan said Dr Mahathir's termination was the Government's prerogative.

"He was appointed by the Government to be adviser, but his criticism of the Government has made his position untenable.

"It was only appropriate that the decision was made," said Abdul Rahman, who is also Barisan Nasional's strategic communications chief and Umno supreme council member.

Deputy Agriculture and Agro-

Based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman said he was saddened and regretted the situation, but added that the Government had no choice.

"It's not that we don't recognise his contributions all these years, but it is very awkward for Tun Mahathir to stay as adviser while at the same time 'hammer' the Prime Minister.

"Moreover, Tun Mahathir has joined the Opposition to attack us. This is not the way to do it. Tun Mahathir has become the Opposition," said Tajuddin, who is also an Umno supreme council member.

Another council member Datuk Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi said the decision was apt.

"Dr Mahathir should have resigned on his own after openly attacking the Government and the Prime Minister.

"It is not right that a person who holds such an important position be allowed to use all the facilities provided by the Government to attack the Government," said Puad.

An aide to Dr Mahathir, when contacted said he would not be issuing any immediate reaction, while Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal, who has also expressed support for the declaration, declined to comment.

Blogger and former newspaper editor Datuk Abdul Kadir Jasin said that since Dr Mahathir was the leading figure in the declaration and has been very direct in calling on Najib to resign, his removal as Petronas adviser was expected.

"This shows that the current administration is not tolerant of criticism," said Kadir.