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Umno leaders criticise Dr M for attacking China deals

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KUANTAN: A Pahang Umno grassroots leader has labelled Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's criticisms of the deals signed between Malaysia and China as a "political game".

Kampung Guai Umno branch chief Mohamad Faizal Mohamad Mokhtar said former prime minister Dr Mahathir's constant attacks were driven by personal interest and had nothing to do with the economic consideration of the matter.

Faizal was commenting on Dr Ma-

hathir's blog post titled "Najib's China Trip", which alleged that the RM55 billion East Coast Rail Line (ECRL) deal would cause Malaysia to be mired in debt to China.

"There is no country that would make an investment that results in loss."

Faizal said the attacks were unfounded as ECRL would bring development to the state.

"When the (ECRL) railway is here, development will follow suit."

This was echoed by Paya Besar member of parliament Datuk Seri Abdul Manan Ismail in his dismissal of Dr Mahathir's criticisms.

The ECRL would benefit his constituents and the rest of Pahang.

Manan said the railway project would allow speedy transportation of people and goods, which would develop areas it passes through including his constituency.

Paya Besar is located a short distance from Kuantan Port, which

would form part of the proposed ECRL network stretching 620km from Kuala Lumpur to Mentakab, Kuantan, Kuala Terengganu and Tumpat.

When asked if he had read the former prime minister's blog post criticising the ECRL and other deals signed between Malaysia and China, Manan said he had not as he was *menyampah* (turned off) by Dr Mahathir's writings.

He said instead of using his vast

experience to advice new generation of leaders, the former prime minister had sought to tear down Malaysia's achievements.

"Now you (Dr Mahathir) seek to condemn and disagree with everything (Prime Minister) Datuk Seri Najib Razak does," he said, adding that Najib should be given the chance to prove himself.

"Don't just think of elevating your son even though there are other capable leaders."