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DR M: MALAYS USED ME FOR 22 YEARS

It's not I who used them, ex-PM claims

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TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad claimed the Malays and Umno have used him and not the other way around when he was in power as Umno president and prime minister.

In an interview with *The Malaysian Insight* on Thursday, the former prime minister claimed that he had not personally benefited from being leader of the party and the nation for 22

years.

"If I have used Umno, what are the bad things that I have done? The truth is, it is the Malays who have used me," he told the online news portal.

The Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia chairman said this in response to allegations by Deputy Prime Minister and Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi that he had championed the "Malay agenda" during his time in power in order to make use of the Malays and Umno.

Responding to Dr Mahathir's

claims, Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Mohd Puad Zarkashi said the former Umno president would not have been able to stay in power for 22 years if he did not use the Malays and Umno.

"Dr Mahathir exploited the Malay and Islamic sentiments, in order to influence the Malays and Umno to keep him in power.

"As a dictator, Dr Mahathir used the Malays and Umno as support in his move to fire the chief justice and several other High Court judges.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

"Without the use of the Malays and Umno, it is impossible that Dr Mahathir could amend the Constitution to reduce the power of the Conference of Rulers," he said.

He added that all these were efforts done to make him a powerful dictator and benefited him greatly.

"That is why he was able to implement the "crony capitalism" policy that brought riches to only certain individuals, including his children.

"Dr Mahathir's claims are un-

reasonable because even today, Dr Mahathir is using the Malays to bring down Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak so that his son can become the next prime minister," he said.

Another Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Dahlan said it did not make sense for Dr Mahathir to make such claims.

"There is something wrong with you if you had allowed people to make use of you for 22 years," said Rahman, who is also minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

"How is it that you had allowed people to use you and did not do something about it for that long?"

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