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BLAME GAME

Stop attack on BN or your past will be laid bare, Khairy warns Dr M

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KEPALA BATAS: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's past will be laid bare if he continues to pin the blame on Barisan Nasional for the issues facing the country today.

Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin said many issues were caused by Dr Mahathir during his 22-year tenure as prime minister.

"If possible, we do not want to dredge up Dr Mahathir's history.

"But he continues to point fingers at the current administration for the issues plaguing the country, even though his own track record was worse.

"As such, we have no choice but to lay bare his history for the people to judge for themselves," he said when officiating the Kepala Batas Umno division delegates' meeting here yesterday.

Present were former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Kepala Batas Umno chief Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican.

Khairy was responding to Dr Mahathir's criticism against the extension of the services of Chief Justice Tan Sri Md Raus Sharif

and Court of Appeal president Tan Sri Zulkefli Ahmad Makinudin.

Dr Mahathir had claimed the move would further undermine public confidence in the judiciary.

"Doesn't he (Dr Mahathir) remember that he caused the country's constitutional crisis in 1988 with the sacking of the then chief justice Tun Mohamad Salleh Abbas and five senior judges?

"And, now, he is making all sorts of allegations against the judiciary," said Khairy.

He also said Dr Mahathir was harping on the Malaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) issue even though the government had taken several rationalisation measures.

"Why is he not talking about Bank Negara Malaysia's foreign exchange (forex) market losses in the 1980s and 1990s?"

Khairy said national automaker Proton and flag carrier Malaysia Airlines had suffered major losses during Dr Mahathir's era, adding that the government was forced to bail out both companies.

"There are many more (issues) that we can lay bare if Dr Mahathir continues his attack on the current administration."

At a press conference later, Khairy urged DAP to abide by the Registry of Societies's (RoS) directive to hold a re-election for its central executive committee and not to turn it into a controversial issue.

He denied claims that Barisan Nasional and Umno wanted to see DAP deregistered.

"We are not afraid to face any party in the election. We do not want to see any party disqualified or deregistered.

"It (the directive) has nothing to do with us."

Earlier in his speech, Khairy said Umno must return to its roots as a party that served the Malays and ordinary people.

He said only by doing so could Umno endear itself to the people and win back their support in the 14th General Election.

He said efforts must be made to correct the negative perception that Umno was only meant for the rich and the elite.