

Tun M denies Najib's cronies claims

If I have cronies, I can take care of them, the former PM says

by ASILA JALIL

FORMER Prime Minister (PM) Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad clapped back at Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak's claims that he had asked for the latter to support his cronies when Najib was in power.

Dr Mahathir said he had no cronies and even if he did, he would have been able to take care of them by himself and required no help from Najib.

"I do not have cronies, I only have capable people. If I have cronies, I can take care of them. I do not help those who are not capable.

"If we want to help people by giving out contracts, we need to know first if the projects can be done based on their past achievements. If they show their abilities, we will help them to ensure they succeed," he said in a press conference at Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya yesterday.

The ongoing war between the two former PMs made headlines again after Najib claimed that Dr Mahathir had withdrawn support for him several times because Najib turned a blind eye to the nanogenarian's requests for his cronies during Najib's tenure as PM.



Pic by Hussein Shaharuddin

Dr Mahathir also dismisses claims that his children are billionaires and that he had supplemented his family during his 1st stint as the PM

Najib said Dr Mahathir had often pressured him to give projects to his cronies but when the requests were not heeded, Dr Mahathir would pull his support and started attacking him.

The Parti Pejuang Tanah Air chairman also dismissed claims that his children are billionaires and that he had supplemented his family during his first stint as the PM.

He said he never allowed any of

his family members to join politics when he was the PM.

"There was no nepotism under my leadership. Provide evidence that shows my children are billionaires.

"I want documents to prove that they have got billions of ringgit as claimed by Najib," he said, reiterating that Najib is a liar.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said he had a meeting with Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi before the former became PM in 2018.

He said the Umno president went to his house with three other individuals and tried to be nice to him to avoid being charged for his misconduct when Umno was in power.

"At that time, there was a possibility that I will be the PM, so he tried to be nice to me. However, I already knew his problems as there could be a possibility of him going to jail due to his misconduct.

"I heard that he wanted the charges against him to be dropped

and also stop the investigations being done on him," he added.

In 2018, Ahmad Zahid stated that he had met with Dr Mahathir twice to discuss matters relating to Umno.

According to Ahmad Zahid, the meeting was done following calls from Umno's grassroots members who wanted the party to make changes and convey that it is a party that is waiting to become the government.

Ahmad Zahid currently has 87 charges against him on corruption, bribery, criminal breach of trust and money laundering in relation to his Yayasan Akalbudi's funds, where the High Court last month ordered him to enter defence on 47 of those charges.

Trial Judge Datuk Colin Lawrence Sequerah had earlier dismissed a proposal submitted last year by Ahmad Zahid's defence that he should be immune from prosecution to most of the charges under Section 30(7) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act after the defendant disclosed information about Yayasan Akalbudi during investigation.

The Bagan Datuk MP is also facing 40 charges at the Shah Alam Sessions Court for accepting bribes from a company over the overseas visa system.

That case is fixed for hearing on Feb 3.