

'HE IS NOT A HERO'

Dr M: My resignation had nothing to do with Zahid

KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had nothing to do with his resignation as prime minister in 2020.

In a clapback at the deputy prime minister, Dr Mahathir said Zahid should not regard himself as a hero that tried to oust him to "save Umno".

"Zahid said he was the one who tried to topple me to save Umno.

"The reason I stepped down was because my party, Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, rejected my advice.

"Typically, when a leader is no longer trusted by his followers, it is honourable to step down. And that is what I did," he said in a post on his Facebook page.

His statement was in response to a claim made by Zahid last Sunday, when he admitted to masterminding the move to oust Dr Mahathir from the prime minister's post during Pakatan Harapan's time in power.

Speaking at the Cameron Highlands Umno delegates meeting, Zahid, who is also Umno president, claimed that this was done as the former prime minister had wanted to de-register Umno.

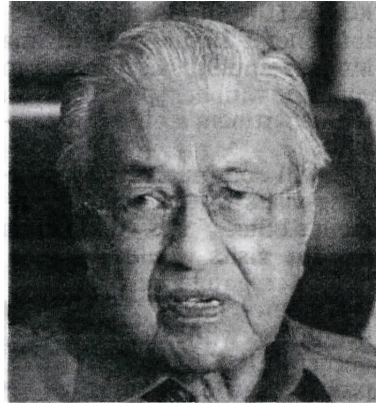
He also claimed that at the time, he had information that Umno was about to be banned.

Dr Mahathir said Zahid had come to see him after Umno lost in the 14th General Election.

At the time, he added, Zahid had become the new Umno president and wanted to know what would happen to the party after losing.

"Losing doesn't mean disappearing (*hapus*). Losing means you don't become the government."

Dr Mahathir added that to him, Umno no longer adhered to its founding principles to fight for race, country, and religion, and



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

claimed that the party using the name Umno now only fought for money.

He said Umno lost its right to use the name as its struggles were no longer the same as its original fight.

"Therefore, it is better if the name Umno is not used by de-registering the party.

"Zahid disagreed with this, did not dissolve his party that was using the name Umno.

"I cannot be toppled by Zahid or his Umno. A party that has lost has no right to oust the party that won."

Dr Mahathir said Zahid came to see him a second time and tried to explain that he was not guilty of the corruption charges being circulated.

"I explained that I did not have the power to clear him of these charges. The evidence he tried to show me should have been presented to the court judge.

"Zahid doesn't need to thump his chest and claim to be a hero who ousted me to save Umno.

"He is not a hero. He is merely someone facing charges in court and willing to cooperate with Umno's staunch enemy, DAP, to become deputy prime minister and save himself from being tried for his wrongdoings."