

**Abdullah should be ready for a stinger from Dr Mahathir, warns Utusan Malaysia
Malaysian Insider**

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Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi should be ready for a taste of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's "caustic and cynical" rebuttal over the former's remarks in his new book warned Utusan Malaysia.

The paper said it was just a matter of time before the country's longest serving prime minister would reply his successor's cutting criticisms.

Awang Selamat, the collective voice of the paper's editors, said Abdullah's remarks in the book "Awakening: The Abdullah Badawi Years in Malaysia" has dissipated any hope of improved relations between the two.

"I'm praying that a healthier debate will take place so that any negative fallout doesn't affect Umno and Barisan Nasional. This needs both leaders to cooperate," Awang wrote in his weekly column in the Umno-controlled Utusan Malaysia.

In the book, Abdullah, popularly known as Pak Lah, spoke about how the country would have gone bankrupt had he bowed to pressure from Mahathir to continue spending without control on mega projects.

Abdullah said Mahathir only wanted his suggestions to be followed without question and refused to listen to the opinion of others. He cited an example where he went to see Mahathir to explain the postponement of several mega projects due to a budget deficit but his proposals were rejected and he was told to continue spending.

Abdullah said Mahathir was furious when several mega projects including the double tracking (rail system) had to be delayed. He said if Malaysia had continued spending, he could visualise a scenario of the country going bankrupt.

"Under my administration, the country reduced the national deficit from 5 percent to 3.2 percent," the nation's fifth prime minister mentioned in the book.

The mainstream media have reported that Abdullah's book was not his thoughts but that of writers' with different backgrounds including opposition leaders.

Seri Setia assemblyman Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad who also contributed articles to Abdullah's book echoed this line of thought.

Nik Nazmi, who is also the Pakatan Rakyat communication director, said the book, edited by Bridget Welsh and James Chin was a collection of opinions from various parties about Abdullah's time in power.

"The theme of the book is the general evaluation and thoughts of the public throughout Abdullah's administration. Both the editors had also interviewed Abdullah to get his thoughts and opinions," Nik Nazmi said.

"Besides that, the book also gathered articles from various quarters including Barisan Nasional leaders, opposition members, academics and professors," he said, adding the likes

of former Selangor Menteri Besar Dr Mohd Khir Toyo and former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Zaid Ibrahim had also contributed.

Gua Musang MP Tan Sri Tengku Razaleigh Tengku Hamzah also wrote the foreword for Abdullah's book.

Some parties who have read part of the book have commented that it slammed Mahathir more than telling the actual story.

It was also revealed in The Malaysian Insider last week that an authorised biography on Abdullah is expected to be released late next year. The book was commissioned early this year and will cover his life from before Merdeka until recent years. – August 11, 2013.

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