

Dr M roasts Pak Lah about spendthrift ways and bankruptcy
Malaysian Insider
Aug 22 , 2013
BY JENNIFER GOMEZ

In a response dripping with sarcasm today, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad finally responded to criticism by Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi that Malaysia would have gone bankrupt had he followed his predecessor's brand of economics.

Malaysia's longest serving prime minister acidly said in a blog posting that "billions would have been saved if he stepped down earlier".

"Just imagine how many billions more would be saved if I had stepped down earlier before building the North-South Highway, Penang Bridge, KLIA, West Port, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya, the Petronas Twin Towers and a host of other mega projects.

"We would be sitting on a mountain of ringgit," Dr Mahathir said of his "spendthrift PM" reputation in his popular blog today.

His biting comments came after Abdullah's interview was published in a book covering his years as the prime minister of Malaysia titled Awakening: The Abdullah Badawi Years In Malaysia.

In the interview, Abdullah spoke about the nation going bankrupt if he had gone ahead on Dr Mahathir's advice to carry on with certain mega projects.

Dr Mahathir was prime minister from 1981 to 2003 when he resigned in favour of Abdullah, who then won a 91% majority in the 2004 election but lost the two-thirds super-majority in 12th general election in 2008.

"It must have been a very rich Government which went for the 12th General Election. Sadly the people did not appreciate the billions that were saved.

"They rejected the Government party, giving 5 states and one federal territory to the opposition, and just a small majority to the thrifty party," Dr Mahathir said.

He also said he was happy Abdullah had explained that it was the interviewer who wrote about the country going bankrupt.

"Yes, I agree that I was a spendthrift Prime Minister who finished all the government money building the North South Expressway, Penang Bridge, West Port, KLIA, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya and an assortment of others.

"Had Tun Abdullah succeeded me earlier all these would be stopped to save Malaysia from bankruptcy. As it is, he managed to stop the crooked bridge and the railway double-tracking and electrification project," Dr Mahathir wrote in his blog posting.

On the crooked bridge, he highlighted that the bridge would have cost under RM1 billion to build but the government had to pay RM200 million to cancel the project.

According to him, the railway project from Johor Baru to Padang Besar was to cost RM14 billion – slightly more than RM2 billion per year for six years.

"Fourteen billion ringgit was saved. But then it was found necessary to build the electrified double track from Ipoh to Padang Besar at a cost of RM12 billion.

A contract was given to a foreign company to build the track from Seremban to Gemas. I don't know what it cost. Looks like the RM14 billion saved was spent on very much shorter tracks, about one-third in length," he added.

The former PM did not stop there with his scathing remarks.

He went to state that the "small jet he used was only good for the Deputy Prime Minister".

"A big jet was bought not through the usual channels but by some private individual. There was denial by the government that the A320 was bought for the use by the Prime Minister.

"But the aircraft is even today used by the Prime Minister. Wonder why the deal was struck. Who really owns the aircraft? How much money has been saved by the Government from this deal?" he questioned.

He said that in his time, the government budget was for the government to spend, but under Abdullah, the government budget was extended for use by the private sector as well.
- August 22, 2013.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/dr-m-roasts-pak-lah-about-spendthrift-ways-and-bankruptcy>