

**Dr M only happy when 'Dr Mahathir clone' takes over Putrajaya, says Musa Hitam**  
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**BY LEE SHI-IAN AND MD IZWAN**

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will not be satisfied until there is a clone of himself in the seat of power, says Tun Musa Hitam, in reference to the former prime minister's latest outburst against the Najib administration.

Musa, who was deputy prime minister from 1981 to 1986, said Dr Mahathir had never stopped feeling unhappy with any sitting leader since leaving public office in 2003.

"He will only be satisfied if there is a Mahathir clone who becomes the top leader in Malaysia," Musa told The Malaysian Insider in an exclusive interview this week.

He was commenting on Dr Mahathir's decision to withdraw support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's government.

Dr Mahathir also outlined a laundry list of complaints against Putrajaya.

"Look at all the deputies who served during Dr Mahathir's 22 years in office. I was considered dangerous. Tun Ghafar Baba (1986-1993) was considered to be all right, loyal. Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (1993-1998) was considered to be a terrible fellow.

"Anwar was said to be disloyal and alleged to have done this and that. Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (1999-2003) was such a nice guy," Musa said.

Musa said it did not take long before Dr Mahathir viewed Abdullah as being Malaysia's worst and weakest prime minister simply because Abdullah disregarded his wishes.

"So out with him," he said with a wave of his hand.

Musa, 80, left the government in 1986 after tendering his resignation over differences with Dr Mahathir.

The following year, he teamed up with his then arch political foe, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, to take on Dr Mahathir and Ghafar, then a deputy prime minister and Umno vice-president for the party leadership.

Dr Mahathir defeated Razaleigh by 43 votes while Musa failed to retain his post by a similar margin.

While Razaleigh went on to form Semangat 46, Musa remained in Umno.

Musa said when Najib succeeded Abdullah, Dr Mahathir was announcing that the former was his boy and was busy advising him to do this and that.

"But when it appeared that Najib knew his mind and was doing things on his own, it got worse and worse for Dr Mahathir.

"Dr Mahathir felt that Najib was not consulting him on important issues but instead subjecting himself to foreign influences," Musa said.

"That is Dr Mahathir for you, do not believe what he says about claiming that his criticism of Putrajaya is friendly advice.

"His objective is to get Najib out of Putrajaya," Musa said flatly.

Speaking to The Malaysian Insider at his office in Hampshire Place in Kuala Lumpur, Musa looked relaxed as he tackled a variety of issues.

"The only possibility of satisfying Dr Mahathir is to put a clone of himself in the seat of power."

Musa said this was not an issue of democracy within Umno, it was simply about Malaysia's former prime minister.

"Najib has already shown that he is willing to accept criticism from within and outside Umno," Musa said.

"In Dr Mahathir's time, any criticism of him in the mainstream media by any Umno politician would spell the end of the dissenter's career."

Musa said there was a sense of insecurity and lack of direction among Umno members, which had been caused by Dr Mahathir's comments and criticism.

"Malaysia is a practising democratic country with certain limitations, it may not be perfect but Umno must learn how to handle it.

"So far, it has been good. Despite criticism, Najib has kept his cool and not cracked.

"Dr Mahathir has never faced the kind of criticism which Najib has faced," Musa said.

Musa said this was the positive side of Najib, accepting the various criticism, especially from news portals. "If you do not know how to handle democracy, it will eat you alive."

Last week, Dr Mahathir said he was withdrawing support for Najib, saying that his criticism on various issues had fallen on deaf ears.

"I have no choice but to withdraw my support. This has not been effective so I have to criticise," he said, adding that Najib was no better than his predecessor, Pak Lah.

"Many policies, approaches and actions taken by the government under Najib have destroyed inter-racial ties, the economy and the country's finances."

Among the issues he listed were the abolishment of the Internal Security Act, Najib's "humble" attitude towards neighbouring countries and for using government money to gain support from the people each time there was an election.

To date, Umno leaders have been mainly cautious in their reaction to Dr Mahathir's strong and open criticism against Najib. – August 28, 2014.

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