

Najib should answer Dr M, says Umno veep
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Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal appears to be weighing in the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak-Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad spat, urging Najib to answer the questions raised by the latter, Utusan Malaysia reported.

The rural and regional development minister said he was confident if the prime minister explained the issues raised, he would convince the people as well as Dr Mahathir.

The Sabah lawmaker also rejected Najib's contention that Dr Mahathir was not satisfied with the government's decision to cancel the crooked bridge project from Johor to Singapore.

"He asked many questions that needed explanation, so it is important for us to explain them in detail, I believe it is not because of the crooked bridge," he was quoted as saying by the Umno-controlled Malay daily.

"This is important so that when an explanation is made, we can convince not only Dr Mahathir, but also the rakyat.

"While we are waiting for the auditor-general and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), it is important for anyone with information such as the Finance Ministry to give a detailed explanation about the issues raised," he said in reference to the debt-saddled 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

He said this during a press conference at an Umno Youth event in Ipoh yesterday.

Shafie added that Dr Mahathir's critical nature was also well-known by all.

"This kind of thing is not only taking place during Najib's era as prime minister, but happened before this," he said, possibly referring to Dr Mahathir's criticism of his successor Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Dr Mahathir has gone on a tirade against Najib in recent months, urging the prime minister to step down over the 1MDB scandal, for continuing the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M), and also the murder of a Mongolian woman, Altantuya Shaariibuu.

Najib gave a special interview on TV3 last week to address some of the issues raised by Dr Mahathir, but the former prime minister said that there were still many questions left unanswered, including the whereabouts of 1MDB's Caymans funds, which had reportedly been parked in Singapore.

In his latest blog post, Dr Mahathir said: "I know I am alone. But I feel responsible to the people, is that wrong? When the people's money goes missing and is hidden from them, is it wrong for me to ask?"

In response, former Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhd Taib said that Dr Mahathir could always count on the support of the silent majority.

Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin also said yesterday that Dr Mahathir was not alone in speaking the truth, although his remarks were made a forum on criminalising war and in reference to standing up against the world's superpowers.

"Telling the truth and standing up... This is your trademark since you were a young doctor and Umno member.

"You are not alone in telling the truth," said Muhyiddin at an anti-war forum in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, which Dr Mahathir had also attended.

Muhyiddin's remarks were seen by the media as a veiled reference to Dr Mahathir's attacks against Najib, but the latter clarified that it was in relation to opposing war crimes. – April 20, 2015.

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