

Dr M's attack on Najib bad for economy, says Ahmad Maslan
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Datuk Ahmad Maslan has urged Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to stop attacking Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, saying that such actions could negatively affect the economy and tarnish the country's image.

The deputy finance minister, in a report by *Mingguan Malaysia* today, said the time has come for the former prime minister to put a halt to his criticism, adding that Najib has answered the 15 questions posed by the former Umno leader.

"Although the Bank Negara Malaysia governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz had said that our economy is still positioned on strong foundations based on strong reserves, economic growth, controlled inflation and low unemployment rate.

"However, issues brought forward by Dr Mahathir and support by certain groups are said to have also contributed to the decline of ringgit," he was quoted as saying in the weekend edition of the Umno mouthpiece.

Ahmad, who is also Pontian MP, said Najib will not resign from his post just because of an individual's request.

"The people will eventually know that what the former PM is doing is not bringing any good to the country but instead tarnishes the image and reputation of the country."

Asked about the continued decline of ringgit, Ahmad said if the situation continues, prices of imported goods will eventually increase.

"The economy will face a tough times despite having strong foundations. However, this may be inevitable."

On Thursday, Dr Mahathir commented that political factors may have played a part leading to the weakening ringgit despite the country having strong economic fundamentals.

He said while the depreciation of the currency during his tenure in the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis was the work of currency traders, the current scenario "had some political influence" to it.

The longest serving Malaysian prime minister has been a strong critic of the Najib administration, especially concerning debt-laden 1Malaysia Development Bhd.

Meanwhile, in recent months, the ringgit has been under pressure, by continued strengthening of the US dollar and low oil prices.

It is said to be hovering around 3.75 to the US dollar – a touch away from 3.8 – where it was pegged against the dollar during the Asian financial crisis.

On a weekly basis, the ringgit traded lower against the US dollar at 3.7580/7610 from last Friday's 3.7170/7200.

The ringgit was also lower against other major currencies. – June 14, 2015.

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