

**Najib not a liberal, Zaid responds to Dr M**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
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Datuk Seri Najib Razak is "anything other than a liberal", said a former Umno minister in disagreeing with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who last night said that Najib's liberalism had made Malaysia more racist.

In a series of posts on his Facebook and Twitter accounts, Datuk Zaid Ibrahim cited a few examples to illustrate his point, including claiming that the government was managed in a secretive manner.

"According to Tun M Najib is a liberal and practising liberalism. Well it's the first time we have a liberal PM who supports Hudud," he said in one post, referring to the Islamic penal code which was passed by the Kelantan legislature in March with the support of Umno assemblymen.

"This liberal PM has allowed Syariah court to claim parity with the high court, enacted Sedition Act to send dissenters to jail.

"This liberal PM manages his government with outmost secrecy.

"Its closer to the truth that he is anything other than a liberal," Zaid said in several tweets today.

Last night, the former prime minister blamed Najib's "liberal" leadership and desire to mimic the Western world's "current thinking" on freedom and equality as reasons Malaysia had become more racist.

Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister had said such concepts could not be applied in Malaysia, where one race was still less developed than the others and required affirmative action.

"So when you have a leader who just gets influenced by current thinking that 'of course, we must be liberal, we must not restrict people, we must do away with ISA (Internal Security Act), and we must be free to do anything', the result is more tension between races.

"When there is tension between races, when the Malays realise they cannot rely on Chinese support any more, they must go back to their own race.

"Before, we can be sure that the Chinese would support the government party and so will the Indians... but now people are more racist than ever before because the leadership does not understand the problem of the Malaysian community," Dr Mahathir had said in a speech at a dinner by the Foreign Correspondents Club.

Najib has been panned for rolling back on his pledge to repeal the Sedition Act when in November last year, he said the colonial-era law would remain and be

strengthened.

Parliament passed amendments to the law in April which now included a provision to protect the sanctity of Islam, while other religions also could not be insulted. It would also criminalise calls for the secession of Sabah and Sarawak and did away with bail for those charged.

Najib's government also gave its tacit support to rival Islamist party PAS's plan to enact the Islamic penal code in the east coast state of Kelantan when Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said last year Putrajaya backed the state's move to implement hudud. – June 2, 2015.

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