

Stop attacking Dr Mahathir, it only weakens the party, Muhyiddin tells Umno

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By Diyana Ibrahim

The attacks by several Umno members against former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will only increase his popularity while weakening the lynchpin Barisan Nasional party, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

Some Umno members had taken to the mainstream media to speak out against Dr Mahathir following his open criticisms of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

"Stop attacking him. He is a former prime minister. The more you attack, the more popular he becomes and as a result, we will fall instead," Muhyiddin said at an Umno Cheras meeting tonight.

He said Dr Mahathir was a father figure for Umno, and a man full of ideas.

"I personally never had a problem with him. It was never difficult for me to communicate with him," Muhyiddin said.

Dr Mahathir, Najib's supporter-turned-detractor, has openly called for the prime minister to resign over the 1MDB scandal and a myriad of other issues.

However, Najib has refused to do so and has launched an open attack against Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister, with his loyalists in Umno defending him against Dr Mahathir's criticisms.

This includes Umno Supreme Council member Tan Sri Annuar Musa, Umno vice-presidents Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, and Kedah Umno leader Datuk Ahmad Lebai Sudin.

Annuar had said that he was disappointed with Dr Mahathir for speaking about the controversies and criticising Najib to the foreign press, saying that the former prime minister did not like it when other ministers did the same thing when he was in power.

Referring to Dr Mahathir's open attack against Najib, Home Minister Zahid noted that the retired statesman had demanded complete loyalty from his party members and Cabinet colleagues when he was prime minister.

Hishammuddin, who is Najib's cousin, said that Umno could not afford to waste time answering Dr Mahathir's allegations as it had a country to run.

"When is it going to stop? When are we going to stop having to answer all these allegations that have been raised day in day out by him?"

“What is the end game, what is the purpose? If we continue like that who is going to run the country?” he asked.

Lebai had challenged Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir to step down from his position if he supported his father's criticisms against the prime minister. – July 26, 2015

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