

**Dr M predicted people like Ali, say asylum seeker's parents**  
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**BY HASBULLAH AWANG CHIK**

As Ali Abd Jalil prepares for life as an asylum seeker in Sweden, his critics have turned their attention on the activist's parents, accusing them of not raising their children properly.

But Abd Jalil Abdul Rahman and Endon Bidin, however, remain unfazed by the attacks.

They said proof of their children's upbringing could be seen in the fact that seven of them had either university degrees or were pursuing PhDs.

These were among the things Ali's parents disclosed to The Malaysian Insider in a recent interview after a little more than two months since their son left for Sweden.

While they might not agree with what Ali did, which led him to be charged with sedition, they said their son was not unique in questioning the Malay rulers.

Jalil said that former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was also a critic of the rulers and had even stripped their immunity from criminal prosecution in 1993.

In fact, said the activist's father, Ali had merely fulfilled Dr Mahathir's prediction 21 years ago that if the rulers' immunity was not removed, ordinary people would rise up.

Taking insults for Ali

Ali's case grabbed national headlines when he sought political asylum in Sweden on October 21 following his charge under the Sedition Act 1948 for criticising the Sultan of Johor.

He went to Sweden with the help of several human rights groups after he claimed that his life was in danger. Ali said that he was being tailed by thugs after he was released from prison, where he had also claimed that a policeman had beaten him up.

Ali, who lodged a police report against the policeman, had also been

re-arrested and taken from Selangor to Johor, in total spending more than 20 days in police lock-ups, prompting his lawyer to describe it as a "sedition roadshow" and to remark that he had spent more time in detention than a murder suspect.

Abd Jalil Abdul Rahman says former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad predicted 21 years ago that if the rulers' immunity was not removed, ordinary people will rise up. – The Malaysian Insider pic by Seth Akmal, January 4, 2015. Abd Jalil Abdul Rahman says former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad predicted 21 years ago that if the rulers' immunity was not removed, ordinary people will rise up. – The Malaysian Insider pic by Seth Akmal, January 4, 2015. The 30-year-old is now working and residing in Morsta, Sweden, while waiting for his application for asylum to be approved.

Endon said that after Ali's detractors saw that their words were not having an effect, they began targeting his siblings and parents.

"They're not attacking Ali now but all the children of Abd Jalil. All sort of stuff.

"Some have sent open letters addressed to Abd Jalil and family, not just Ali. But we accept this fact.

"Some have insulted us, his parents. I felt slighted when they said we did not know how to bring up our kids. But I didn't want to argue with them through Facebook.

"We produced children who have bachelor's degrees and master's. I'd like to see the faces of my critics who say I have failed," said Endon.

Seven of Endon and Jalil's 10 children have bachelor's degrees. Of the seven, three have master's and are pursuing their doctorates in various fields.

'Dr Mahathir saw this coming'

While he may not have agreed with his son's opinions and how Ali expressed them, this did not stop Jalil from discussing these issues with him.

"He criticised the sultan. I asked him what has the sultan done to our family?

"He responded by saying, should we wait until our family is affected only then act? He argued that if we want justice, we can't just wait until we are the ones who are affected and only then do we act.

"He said that we cannot be self-centred. He was more proactive in pursuing a

struggle,” said Jalil.

Jalil also said he often reminded Ali not to use profanity or crude words when expressing himself.

“But he would then tell me that what ‘those’ people did were more cruel and oppressive. So what’s the big deal with him using swear words?”

“That’s how he saw things. It’s probably true.”

Jalil, however, never expected his son to be so aggressive in his criticism, especially since Ali’s twin brother, Ahmad, had been punished a year earlier under the Sedition Act for insulting the Johor Sultan.

Ahmad had been fined RM20,000 by the Johor Baru Sessions Court after he was found guilty of posting remarks insulting the Johor Sultan on his Facebook page in 2012.

“We thought that Ahmad’s case would be a lesson (to Ali), but it didn’t happen that way. When his brother was punished, he became more active.”

Activist Ali Abd Jalil is seeking asylum in Sweden. – The Malaysian Insider file pic, January 4, 2015. Activist Ali Abd Jalil is seeking asylum in Sweden. – The Malaysian Insider file pic, January 4, 2015. Jalil said 21 years ago Dr Mahathir had predicted that people like Ali would speak up.

“In 1993, Dr Mahathir had said everyone knows that some rulers can be tyrants and if their immunity is not taken away, the people will rise up.

“Dr Mahathir had speculated that this would happen. Ali is the one who made it a reality.”

## Reunion

Although separated from her sixth child, Endon feels that it would be better for Ali to remain in Sweden if it meant that he would be safe.

“Our critics think that his parents are sad because he ran to a faraway place. But we’ve been calm about it.

“It’s normal these days for kids to go all over the world. We can still stay in touch through Skype.”

She keeps in regular touch with her son so that the distance does not drive

them apart.

"I tell him to pray and he shows me pictures of him going to the mosque. So he does do what I say.

"I pray for his future. I only think of positive things and one day we will be reunited outside of Malaysia." – January 4, 2015.

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