

Public transport neglected? Dr M chortles, tells Najib to talk to a mirror

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad has laughed off Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's claim that he neglected public transport because of his 'obsession' with the national car company Proton.

"He should look into the mirror and talk to the mirror. No one understands his logic," Mahathir said at a press conference in Putrajaya today.

The former prime minister also said that he had left the country in 'shipshape' condition when he resigned in 2003 and that Proton had been doing well financially until the government 'started fiddling with it'.

Without naming anyone, Najib, at another event in Kuala Lumpur today, said one man's obsession with Proton had led to public transport development in the country being neglected.

"One man's obsession with the idea of a national car – which is now being turned around under international joint ownership – led to Malaysia lacking an efficient public transport system," Najib said in his keynote speech at the 'Invest Malaysia 2018' conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Mahathir rebutted this by saying Proton was very profitable.

"That national car project was making so much money. It built Tanjung Malim with its own money.

"It was a profitable venture, and then, of course, the government decided to fiddle with it," he said.

Mahathir added that the government had failed to support Proton, including not giving it research grants.

As for Proton's plans to streamline its vendors and dealerships into showrooms, he said this would result in lost income for the carmaker's vendors.

As for another of his supposed legacy problems, Mahathir said when he resigned, the country was in good condition.

He said he could have actually resigned in 1998, if it weren't for the Asian Financial Crisis.

"(When I resigned) I left the country in shipshape (condition).

"But after these two others took over, then we had problems. We did not have 1MDB before," Mahathir said.

He was referring to his successors Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Najib, against both of whom he has waged verbal wars.

On Najib's son Nazifuddin's call for him to return to Umno, Mahathir said the party was no longer the same.

"It is no longer Umno. It is Najib's party, he has hijacked it," he said.

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