

Leave Umno, Nazri tells Dr M

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad should leave Umno because he has coluded with the opposition and continued to criticise the Government, says Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Aziz.

Declaring "open war" on Dr Mahathir, Nazri said the Government would no longer keep quiet over Dr Mahathir's constant attacks.

He accused Dr Mahathir of being unfair in imposing conditions on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Nazri accused Dr Mahathir of not being sincere and of not loving Umno, but stressed that "we will not sack the former prime minister from the party".

"Maybe he feels that he may be expelled because he realises what he did to Umno is unforgivable," he said at a press conference at the Parliament lobby yesterday.

The press conference was called to answer Dr Mahathir's latest round of criticisms against the Government during a dialogue with local news portal *Malaysia Today* on Saturday, which was also attended by opposition leaders.

Nazri said Abdullah would not stoop so low as to answer Dr Mahathir's accusations.

"Pak Lah is a gentleman. It is not good for the country to see a clash between the Prime Minister and the former premier."

Nazri said Abdullah had his way of running the Government and gave freedom to the respective ministers and government-linked companies to handle their business.

He said he took it upon himself as the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and as the Minister in charge of Parliament to answer Dr Mahathir's queries and ensure that all his remarks were replied to.

Nazri added that ambassador-at-large Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak and Proton chairman Datuk Azlan Hashim had already responded to Dr Mahathir's queries on the scrapping of the scenic bridge and Proton, respectively.

"When he was the prime minister he told us not to support him personally, but to support the party (Umno) and support him as president.

"We supported Dr Mahathir when he was the premier. We are now taking his advice and supporting the current Prime Minister.

"But he is angry with us and with Najib for doing so and continues to attack us. He even says we are half past six and are part of the chorus line," Nazri said.