

# Zam: Mahathir should have emulated Kuan Yew

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**SUNGAI PETANI:** Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad would have fared better if he had remained in the Cabinet as a minister mentor like Singapore's former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin said it was too late now as "he has missed the boat."

He said Dr Mahathir should have emulated Lee, who chose to remain within the government's administration after serving as Singapore's first prime minister for 31 years.

"Lee Kuan Yew is smarter than Tun (Dr Mahathir) for he chose to remain as a minister mentor to the government (in 2004) after stepping down as prime minister. In that way, he is still able to contribute to the government and be involved in the country's administration," he told reporters after a visit to Kampung Bujang near here yesterday.

Zainuddin said that although Dr Mahathir was a leader of great calibre, he might have to face an uphill struggle to persuade Umno members to

"choose between him and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi" as the Malays were traditionally patriotic to the government of the day.

"Although Umno and the Malays are saddened by the events which have taken place between Tun (Dr Mahathir) and Pak Lah (Abdullah), they will choose the current leadership if it boils down to making a decision between the two," he said.

"The idealism of the Malays has not digressed from this tradition."

He said this was because the Malays had traditionally been patriotic and loyal to the current leadership.

"Incidents which took place during the tenure of the former prime ministers Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Abdul Razak prove that Umno members will not take risks which might jeopardise the party and leadership," he said.

Zainuddin also said Dr Mahathir's allegations that Umno members no longer respected him was "purely his own assumption."

Merbok Umno division deputy chief Senator Tajulurus Mohd Zain urged Dr Mahathir to pull out from contesting as a delegate at the Kubang Pasu division this Saturday.

"As a nationalist, Tun (Dr Mahathir) should not take a chance to contest although he has received nominations from 16 branches in the division," he said.

"Although he stands a 50:50 chance, I believe he will still lose and that will put him at a disadvantage as a former leader with a high social standing."