

PM on transfer of UMBC shares to Bumis

TELUK INTAN, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the transfer of UMBC shares from non-Bumiputeras to Bumiputeras was through the efforts of Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin when he was a businessman.

The Prime Minister recalled how Umno Youth at that time raised the question of UMBC being controlled by the MCA and wanted the bank to be in Bumiputera control.

Encik Daim played an important role by agreeing to exchange his shares in Malaysian-French Bank (at that time Banque Indosuez) with the MCA shares in UMBC following the Umno Youth call, he said.

Apart from Encik Daim, Pernas also held shares in UMBC, he said when opening the Pasir Salak division delegates' conference here.

He also said he had already directed all Cabinet Ministers not to hold a lot of shares to avoid any conflict of interests.

Following the directive, Encik Daim sold all his shares in UMBC to Pernas as a partner, he added.

Slander

Dr Mahathir said that after the sale of the shares, UMBC shares went up in price with the generally improved share market situation in the country.

Pernas could sell its UMBC shares at a big profit, if it wanted, he said.

The Prime Minister said every transaction in UMBC was on Government record and evidence showed that the accusation that Encik Daim siphoned off UMBC's money was not true.

On Sime Darby shares sold by Encik Daim, he said that considering that Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB) was reluctant to buy them, the shares were sold on the open market and bought up by non-Bumiputeras.

This had resulted in the Bumiputera position in Sime Darby being jeopardised, he said, adding that non-Bumiputeras were reluctant to sell the shares because of their high price.

Dr Mahathir hoped the issue of buying and selling UMBC and Sime Darby shares would not become material for slander and propaganda.

Anyone wishing to get information on this could do so from him, he said.

On the Proton Saga, he regretted that at one time several leaders in the Government unanimously supported the project but are now very critical of it, saying it is a "luxury" project and a waste of money. — Bernama