

PM: PANEL TO PROBE PARTY FUNDS IS OUT

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GENTING HIGHLANDS, Thurs. — The Government has no intention of setting up a royal commission of inquiry to investigate how political parties obtain their funds, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the Government would not be able to carry out its work if it spent its time setting up commissions of inquiry.

"Moreover, if the findings are

not in favour of them (the Opposition), they will say it is not fair," he added.

He was commenting on a proposal by Parti Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah that a commission of inquiry be set up to investigate how opposition parties and the Barisan Nasional obtained their funds.

Tengku Razaleigh said his party did not owe the Government

any explanation on how it obtained funds for its political campaigns.

He also said the Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah had not violated any law but if the Prime Minister wanted an investigation into its source of funds, the Barisan too should be investigated. Dr Mahathir said all parties were free to obtain funds but the Government was interested in the source

of their money.

He said it wanted to know whether the money came from overseas or an individual, and whether the money had been properly administered.

"There is nothing wrong for them (the Opposition) or Umno to get money. If there is proof that there is foreign influence with a certain motive, then we cannot allow that," he said.