

U GE 22-08 00247 EA866

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Attn editors

Rptng, substituting para four.

MAHATHIR SAYS +INSIDERS+ MAY BE GIVING INFO TO OPPOSITION PARTIES

Mahathir - opposition

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 22 (Bernama) -- prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today there may be government employees giving information to the opposition parties to raise politically motivated issues to smear the government's name.

He said action would be taken against those who fed the opposition parties with information but acknowledged that it was difficult to obtain evidence on these people.

+We are disappointed that this is happening but what is saddening is why they are giving information to the opposition parties.

+It does not mean that the government will not act... we will act if the employees have evidence (of irregularities) and report to the government, + he told reporters after flagging off the Petronas Rally of Malaysia '92 at Taman Tasik Perdana here.

He was responding to reporters' questions as to how the DAP had been able to obtain classified information from government departments to raise such issues as the allocation of Telekom Malaysia shares, the pornographic videotape allegedly involving former Dewan Rakyat Deputy Speaker D.P. Vijandran and the purchase of Volvo cars by City Hall.

+There may be insiders (giving the information)... but it is a little difficult for us to obtain evidence on this, + Dr Mahathir said. -- more  
end of rptn

▼22/08/19-38MST

U GE 22-08 00180 EA867

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Mahathir - opposition 2 Kuala Lumpur

Asked about the claim by the City Hall employees union yesterday that it had evidence of City Hall senior officers having given information to opposition parties, Dr Mahathir said the government was willing to accept its report if the information could be used as evidence.

+But if this is just an accusation, it is difficult for us to accept it. It is not only the senior officers who have access to documents but also the junior staff, + he said.

DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang had raised the issue of what was claimed to be irregularity in the purchase of 22 Volvo cars by City Hall.

Asked whether Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Elyas Omar had briefed him on the purchase of the cars, Dr Mahathir said he did not want to intervene now because the matter was under investigation.

+If I intervene, my name will be used for purposes which may go contrary to the process of law, + he said. -- more

▼22/08/19-55MST

U GE 22-08 00205 EA868

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Mahathir - opposition 3 Kuala Lumpur

Asked whether Lim could be prosecuted if he had in his possession documents classified under the Official Secrets Act (OSA), Dr Mahathir said if there was evidence that Lim had the documents then he had committed an offence.

Dr Mahathir said that even though the DAP had raised the issues, the government would hold to the truth and take action if there was a basis for it.

+For example, the video tape said to involve Vi jandran.. we follow the normal process, ..it is the same in the case of the Volvo issue. .. because we do not want people to just make accusations.

+Maybe they are not in the wrong, and such accusations have smeared their name. On the other hand, if the claims are true we have to clean up the situation, + he said.

Asked about the suggestion by Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah that the Barisan Nasional use its two-thirds majority in the Dewan Rakyat to amend the Federal Constitution and related laws to align them to Syariah laws for those who wanted to embrace Islam, Dr Mahathir said the statement was a **political** gimmick. -- more

♥22/08/20-16MST

U GE 22-08 00094 EA869

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Mahathir - opposition 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

+On the one hand he wants to defend the DAP and on the other he wants the support of PAS, + he said.

Tengku Razaleigh said three days ago that a non-Muslim should be allowed to embrace Islam once he had come of age although yet to attain the age of 18.

The Federal Constitution provides that a person under 18 years has to have the approval of his parents to convert to another religion. -- Bernama

♥22/08/20-21MST