

Up to the people to judge Razaleigh's allegation of money

PM: Do not tolerate

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and
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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed.

The people should not tolerate anyone who had gone overseas and spread lies about the country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He added that they should condemn politicians who tarnished the image of the country in the foreign media by alleging that money politics was rampant in Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked by reporters to comment on statements made by Parti Melayu Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah in the foreign media that money politics was rampant.

"However, it is up to the people to decide whether they should elect him in the (coming) general election," he said, adding it was up to the people to judge Tengku Razaleigh.

The Prime Minister was at the Deepavali open house hosted by MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu at

the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in August. Tengku Razaleigh was asked how money politics had come into play in elections within Umno.

According to a video recording of the programme, in the possession of the *New Straits Times*, Tengku Razaleigh replied that he had "heard of pay-offs ranging between thousands of dollars into millions of dollars" by politicians in the belief that the positions they sought would give them power.

"These people really go all out to achieve these positions," he said.

The interviewer told the TV audience that Tengku Razaleigh was a prince from Kelantan and "a veteran of the system they call money politics".

Asked how Umno had become "so rich," Tengku Razaleigh alleged that this was because the party had been giving contracts to itself.

Asked how much money he thought was involved, Tengku Razaleigh said that nowadays people did not talk in terms of thousands or millions of dollars, but in terms of billions.

the Chong Hwa Independent High School in Jalan Thomas, off Jalan Ipoh.

Also present at the open house were the Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Cabinet Ministers, diplomats and well-wishers.

Dr Mahathir said he had watched a programme on Australian Television recently in which Tengku Razaleigh alleged that money politics was rampant in this country.

The Prime Minister said money politics also occurred in advanced countries like France and Italy, adding that the situation in Malaysia was not as bad as portrayed by Tengku Razaleigh.

In a programme aired by

politics

lies

At the MIC president's open house, Dr Mahathir said that despite what Tengku Razaleigh had alleged, there was a lot of confidence in the country's political stability among foreign investors.

He said those who understood the position of the country well would continue to invest here.

"The most important yardstick in measuring the stability of this country is on an occasion like today when people of all communities gather and celebrate Deepavali. There is harmony and political stability. Our strategy is simple. We deliver to the people what they expect from us."

To a question on whether the prices of items sold at hotels would be reduced in view of tax exemptions and

PLEASE TURN TO
PAGE 2, COL 8

Anwar: Razaleigh a man with no more ideas

□ FROM PAGE ONE

reductions on foodstuffs, he said he believed that finally they would be reduced.

Asked for his comments on the possible reasons why share prices on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange did not reflect the excellent Budget proposals, Dr Mahathir said he could not understand why the market reacted that way.

Earlier, Anwar, who was also at the open house, was asked to comment on Tengku Razaleigh's efforts overseas to tarnish the Government's image.

He described it as the action of a disappointed and frustrated man who had no more ideas.

Anwar said the Government could confront Tengku Razaleigh but as a political eunuch the latter would run away from such a confrontation, adding that if Tengku Razaleigh was brave he should raise his criticisms in Parliament.

Anwar added that Tengku Razaleigh's disappointment was also the reason why he spread rumours, for example that there was a rift between him and Dr Mahathir.

Tengku Razaleigh, however, was not available for comment. Attempts were made to see him at his house in Langgak Golf, off Jalan U Thant here, but newsmen were told that he was in Johor Baru.