

# Dr M: Alleged poisoning a ploy to shame Govt

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KUALA SELANGOR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the disclosure of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's alleged arsenic poisoning was carefully timed to coincide with the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Leaders' Summit in Auckland, New Zealand and the 12th Commonwealth Law Conference in Kuala Lumpur.

The Prime Minister said the timing was designed to shame the Government and paint a bad picture to influence foreigners.

He said the incident smacked of a ploy to arouse the anger of supporters and make political gain.

He said usually if a person was poisoned, the laboratory would provide the test results immediately to allow for quick medical treatment.

"But in this case, Anwar chose to inform his lawyer Karpal Singh. He did this so that his followers would be angry with the Government and create riots," he said when opening the Kuala Selangor sports

complex here last night.

Also present were Selangor Menteri Resar Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar, Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and National Unity and Social Development Minister Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail. About 25,000 people packed the RM42mil stadium to listen to him.

He said this was not the first time that Anwar had used similar tactics to incite hatred towards the Government and seek public support.

He said in 1974 when he was the Education Minister, Anwar had led a student demonstration over a purported incident in Baling, Kedah where a child had supposedly died of starvation.

He said although the claim was untrue, the demonstrations continued as instigated by Anwar.

"This shows that Anwar likes trouble and uses demonstrations as a means to rise as a leader."

Dr Mahathir said after Anwar was detained under the ISA after the Baling in-

cident, there were no subsequent riots in the country until 1998.

"Only when Anwar was removed from the Government in 1998 that the riots started again," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said that Anwar did not protest against the detention of several people under the ISA in 1987.

"Now because he is charged in court, he says the Government is not fair. All the time when he was a minister and as deputy prime minister he never once said that the Government was unfair."

He said this was not the first time that Anwar and his followers had made claims of poisoning.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar's wife Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail had made a statement last year alleging that the Government would inject HIV virus into Anwar's body, adding that the claim was proven untrue.

"It is not BN's way to poison or inject HIV virus into our political rivals," he added.