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`Poisoning allegation timed to coincide with summit'

Patvinder Singh

KUALA SELANGOR, Mon - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight said that the allegation of arsenic poisoning of his former deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was timed to coincide with the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Summit to sully the nation's image.

It was also timed around the time the 12th Commonwealth Law Conference was being held in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir said the allegation also stirred Anwar's supporters to riot recently in the country's capital.

"We know why they rioted. Because Apec was going on in New Zealand and the Commonwealth Law Conference was going to be held in Malaysia. They wanted to show how dirty their own country is.

"They do not wish to see peace and stability but are willing to tarnish the country for their own political interests," he said in his speech when opening the Kuala Selangor Sports Complex here.

Dr Mahathir said similar allegations were also made when Anwar was arrested last year when his (Anwar's) wife said the Government would inject Anwar with the AIDS virus.

"The Barisan Nasional government is not like that. Maybe they would like to do so. Therefore they must not be given the opportunity to form the Government," he said.

Dr Mahathir said back in 1974 when he was appointed Education Minister some university students had demonstrated, alleging that a youth from Baling, Kedah had died from starvation when it was not true.

"The instigator was Anwar before he became a Datuk Seri. When he was in the Government there were no riots and when he is not there are.

"It is clear that he is clever in using students for his political interests," he said.

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