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## PM refutes selective prosecution claims

Farush Khan; Azran Aziz

JENGKA, Tues. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said accusations that the Government chose to prosecute those close to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was "in itself a confession" that Anwar had cronies and that he had helped them when he was in the Government.

Dismissing such allegations (which had been made by Anwar's supporters) as "not true", the Prime Minister said the confession was "surprising" since Anwar had been claiming he (Anwar) had no cronies.

"It is surprising because when the authorities acted against two or three persons apparently due to their business irregularities, accusations were made that we had picked on those close to Datuk Seri Anwar."

Dr Mahathir made it clear that the Government was impartial and did not interfere in the affairs of the judiciary and "does not deliberately pick on anyone".

He said these two or three persons had probably not faced any legal action before because of certain influence.

"Now that action has been taken based on the law, there are accusations that the Government chooses to take action against those close to Anwar."

Dr Mahathir said the Government did not practise favouritism and acted against anyone for any wrongdoing "even if they are our own friends", including Anwar.

"If they are wrong, they will be brought to court for action.

"I have no right to frustrate legal action although he (Anwar) had asked that the police stop investigation.

"I told him you had made a police report and when you made the police report it is beyond my control. How could we ask the police to stop investigation ... I do not interfere in police affairs."

On the six boxes of documents (on alleged malpractices by certain government and political leaders) which Anwar had kept, Dr Mahathir said: "What he had taken in that six boxes we do not know. They were probably investigation papers."

Asked on some documents which Anwar had disclosed (in his police reports) which allegedly involved some government and political leaders, Dr Mahathir said the matter would be dealt with according to the law.

"We will not interfere," he said.

On the statement by the Kelantan Menteri Besar that it would use the influence of the State Umno chief Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah to help write off the RM600 million loan given by the Federal Government, Dr Mahathir said: "Make Tengku Razaleigh the Menteri Besar, we will do everything for him (Tengku Razaleigh)."

Dr Mahathir said that if the Federal Government helped Kelantan while Nik Aziz remained as the Menteri Besar, Nik Aziz would "go round and tell the people they (the State Government) are good and that is why the Federal Government helps them.

"They do not seem to be grateful and thank the Federal Government for getting the RM600 million loans. This is Pas teachings," he said.

Speaking at a meet-the-people session at the Nadi Kota mini stadium here earlier, Dr Mahathir said he was overwhelmed by the large turnout and hoped they would support the BN government in ensuring continued development and prosperity.

He said, unlike the BN which had been delivering the goods, the Opposition was only good at making all sorts of empty promises to win the

people's support in the general election.  
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