

PM: Hidden money will be exposed

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MALACCA: The ill-gotten gains of Malaysians which have been deposited in Swiss banks will ultimately be public knowledge.

When they are taken to court, their accounts will form the basis of evidence for the prosecution.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that the government has no objections to law enforcement agencies working with Swiss banks and authorities.

"We're not looking to expose anyone. It's not political ... such matters will be tried in court and if there's enough evidence, their exposure is inevitable," *Bernama* quoted him as saying.

He was commenting on developments in the cooperation between the Swiss and Malaysian authorities to provide information on illegal funds kept in Swiss banks.

The assurance of cooperation was given by Swiss President Kaspar Villiger to Mahathir in their discussions during the prime minister's visit in June.

Malaysia had sought help in its investigation into irregularities in financial transactions, especially in the Perwaja Steel case where part of the company's funds was believed to have been traced to Switzerland.

Asked if the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) had obtained the information needed, Mahathir said the agency had already made contact with the Swiss authorities.

However, he said that he has not obtained the latest information from the ACA.

"When I returned (from Switzerland), I asked the ACA and was told that it had already made contact.

"I don't know its findings and it need not inform me about it," he said after opening the Third Malay and Islamic World Convention in Tanjung Kling (*see Page 2*).

Asked about reports that investigations of financial irregularities are not confined to Perwaja, he said: "It's alright, we're not afraid. If there are irregularities in anyone's account, that can be exposed, go ahead."