

'Councilors who do not perform will be dropped'

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PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has warned local council officials that they will be dropped if they do not meet public expectations.

Commenting on the performance of local councils which have come under fire lately following the alleged corruption of a senior officer in the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ), the Prime Minister said:

"We will have to look into this because there have been a lot of complaints against local councils."

If necessary, the Government might have to drop representatives in the local councils who failed to perform their duties, he told reporters at the Budget 2004 Dialogue here, yesterday.

"If they are not performing we may have to change some of the representatives, because some of them want to be popular and do not want to collect taxes.

"Others are not providing proper services," he said.

In Shah Alam, Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Tmg said his ministry has left it to the MPAJ to complete its probe into the alleged graft involving the council's suspended enforcement chief Abdul Kudus Ahmad.

He advised the people of Ampang Jaya and Selangor state, in general, to be patient and wait for the outcome of the investigation.

He said neither the state government nor the ministry could go into the case at this juncture as the probe was being carried out under the council's Workers' Conduct and Discipline Procedures regulations.

"It is only proper to allow the council to examine the case from all facets," he told reporters at a luncheon hosted by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo for the MCA at the Concorde Hotel here, yesterday.

Ong, the newly-appointed MCA president, said his ministry would just wait for the report although there were

calls for an independent body to conduct an inquiry into the allegations against Abdul Kudus.

His deputy, Datuk M. Kayveas, had reportedly alleged that Abdul Kudus collected bribes which averaged RM70,000 monthly for tipping off illegal operators of businesses about impending raids.

The deputy minister had also claimed that he had submitted evidence on the matter to the Anti-Corruption Agency when they recorded his statement last week.

Kayveas asked that the inquiry determine whether or not Abdul Kudus was a bankrupt. He also said he did not think it was appropriate that the suspended MPAJ enforcement chief be charged under the council's Workers' Conduct and Discipline Procedure.

Ong said the outcome of the investigation report would be scrutinised and other aspects of the case would also be studied, "especially on how Abdul Kudus was appointed."