

Dr M: AP list incomplete

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'Release lists from previous years, too'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is not satisfied with the released Approved Permit (AP) list for imported cars, saying it is "incomplete".

He called for the 2004 AP list and that of previous years to be made public, too.

"People should know the whole truth and nothing but the truth," the former prime minister, who returned from an overseas holiday on Sunday, told a press conference at the Petronas Twin Towers here.

Dr Mahathir said International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz made a number of claims on the AP issue at the Umno general assembly which were "not correct".

He also said it was not true that the issuance of APs had increased the number of bumiputras in the automotive industry, "especially when two or three people who had no showrooms got thousands of APs."

He questioned why former officers of the ministry who were not automotive businessmen and who had no facilities to assemble or sell the imported cars received thousands of APs.

Dr Mahathir, who issued a press statement on the AP issue, wanted to know why only the AP list for 2005 was released.

"Once you have released, release everything because

What Dr M said about AP issue and Rafidah

Once you have released, release everything because people may feel suspicious. I like people to think that the Government is transparent as promised, and will give all figures.

When I was prime minister, and I was accused of giving contracts to cronies, I took out the whole pile, showing all the contracts and put that out without amendments.

I regard all the ladies in this country as my daughters. I am old enough to be their father.



I won't be discriminatory and say you are not my daughter. I love all the women in this country and I want to do something for them.

It is not true that giving out so many APs had increased the number of bumiputras in the car business, especially when only two or three people who have no showrooms have received thousands of APs.

I also have a lot of people who say very nice things about me and decide to fight against me. Then they lost against me. But I bear no grudge.

Rafidah's response

"No, no, I am in South Africa. No, please don't ask me."

— Rafidah's reaction when asked if she had heard of Tun Dr Mahathir's statement

She is currently accompanying Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on his visit to South Africa

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"When I was prime minister, and I was accused of giving contracts to cronies, I took out the whole pile showing all the contracts and put that out without amendments," he remarked.

Dr Mahathir also questioned the basis of determining the number of APs issued.

Reiterating that he was not happy with the AP issue, he said the fact was that more foreign cars were being imported more easily into the country.

He pointed out that Rafidah's ministry gave varying figures on the total number of APs issued.

"It is said to be 67,000, then 50,000, then 45,000. These are statements from Miti (Ministry of International Trade and Industry). Apparently, they are not very sure themselves," he said.

On July 18, the Government released the list for open and franchise APs for imported cars for 2005.

This year alone, 67,000 APs have been approved, and of this number more than 28,000 went

to four people – Tan Sri Nasimuddin S.M. Amin, Datuk Syed Azman Syed Ibrahim, Datuk Mohd Haniff Abdul Aziz and Datuk Azzuddin Ahmad.

Dr Mahathir confirmed that he had received a letter from Rafidah on the AP list, along with her birthday wishes to him on his 80th birthday.

"The names of the companies were not given in full. How many people were shareholders in how many companies? How many APs were given? Many things were not revealed to me," he said.

He added that he would make public the letters he had written to Rafidah and the reply he got, stating that copies would also be sent to all Umno delegates.

During his tenure as prime minister, Dr Mahathir said there was never a government resolution not to reveal the names of the people who benefited from government policies.

On calls for Rafidah to apologise to him for purportedly being rude to him, he said: "I am not interested in whether people are rude to me, apologise to me or not. I am interested in knowing the truth ... that

is all because this (APs) has an effect on the national industry and economy."

On whether he regarded Rafidah as a daughter, Dr Mahathir said: "I regard all the ladies in this country as my daughters. I am old enough to be their father."

At a press conference last week, Rafidah broke down, saying that it hurt that people accused her of being rude to Dr Mahathir, whom she regarded as a father figure.

Dr Mahathir said many people came to him and said he was like a father to them.

"I also have a lot of people who say very nice things about me and decide to fight against me.

"Then they lost against me. But I bear no grudge. Many of those people I brought back into the Cabinet, as you know. These people go against me and I still bring them back into the Cabinet and push them up," he added.

Asked whether he had any regrets on this, he said he had none because "that's politics".

■ **Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's response to issues raised in the letter by Rafidah Aziz - Page 4**