

Ex-PM: Project IC book a 'good academic study but ...'

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Former Internal Security Act detainee MD Mutalib's book 'IC Projek Agenda Tersembunyi Mahathir?' has been seen as "a very good academic study" by the alleged mastermind of the scheme.

NONEEx-premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad, however, remained steadfast in his denial that he was not involved in the 'project' to grant identity cards (ICs) to illegal immigrants in Sabah in the 1980s.

He told the royal commission of inquiry on illegal immigrants in Sabah that he had not read the book in full.

However, he said he does not understand how the author concluded that he was the mastermind of the exercise that has been dubbed 'Project IC' and 'Project M'.

"It was a very good academic study," he said today, when asked his opinion of the book.

"But I don't know how he came to the conclusion that it was my instruction (to grant ICs)."

NONEMahathir also said no one had brought the book to his attention because, by the time it was published in 2006, he was no longer the prime minister.

Asked by conducting officer Manoj Kurup as to why his name was used in the book, Mahathir evoked laughter with his reply.

"I realise that when people use my name, books can sell well," he said.

Mahathir also said the government had not acted on the issue of illegal issuance of ICs in the past because the "prime minister at the time" did not feel it was a problem.

"But the prime minister now feels the issue needs to be addressed, and that is why they have set up the commission," he added.

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