

Mahathir: Go ahead and arrest me if I'm wrong
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In his trademark fashion, Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that he has no qualms being arrested if he has broken the law.

He was commenting on a police report lodged by a DAP lawmaker this afternoon, accusing the former premier of sedition.

"I can quote many more extreme statements by everybody, but I don't want to do that. As a politician, I don't expect people to please me all the time but (to) condemn...", he said.

Asked what if police launched an investigation, he replied: "Well, I am just an ordinary citizen now. If I am supposed to be arrested under the law, then go ahead."

In his report, Segambut MP Lim Lip Eng said Mahathir made seditious remarks against DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang during the last general election campaign.

Earlier today, Kit Siang asked Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi if his vow to launch a probe within 24 hours into sedition reports applied to Mahathir as well.

Kit Siang was referring to the remarks made by the former premier when the DAP leader contested for the Gelang Patah parliamentary seat in the last general election.

He quoted Mahathir as saying that the DAP leader was contesting the seat because he wanted the Chinese in Gelang Patah and Johor to "reject working together and sharing with Malays", "to dislike and hate Malays" and to create "conflict and antagonism between the races".

Kit Siang raised this issue following PKR's revelation yesterday that Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim is being probed under the Sedition Act over remarks he made during a political rally three years ago.

Meanwhile, Lip Eng's police report also named Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak with regard to the latter's remarks during the 2010 Umno general assembly on defending Putrajaya till the end.

'Better to held under ISA than dead'

Meanwhile, on a related issue, Mahathir admitted that he had used the Internal Security Act against opponents.

The man who governed the country for 22 years, however, defended his move by saying

that at least ISA detainees are not killed.

"We only detained people under ISA, but they still alive, (we) don't pass judgement on absentee criminals and decide that criminals should be killed and executed.

"Nowadays, they have drone and sent it to kill people. I think that is worse than our record of keeping all our opponent in jail.

"During my time, I jailed everyone. This is what people are saying about me," he said jokingly.

Denying accusations of his iron grip in his trademark sarcasm, Mahathir said he had the "privilege of being a dictator" as it meant easier crisis-management.

"I normally line them up against the wall and kill them," he quipped.

Mahathir was sharing his view on crisis management in a speech at 'CEO Forum: Surviving The Next Global Financial Crisis'.

On a more serious note, Mahathir said his training and practice as medical doctor prepared him for the non-medical crisis in the country.

As an example, he cited the 1997 financial crisis.

"I would have punch (currency speculator George) Soros in the nose.

"I did say nasty things about him. It's very unfair to an emerging country which our currency devalued," he said.