

Minister: Dr M took Arab money too... for a varsity
MalaysiaKini.com
Aug 15, 2015

In an apparent defence of the RM2.6 billion 'political donation' received by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak from a Middle Eastern source, Multimedia and Communication Minister Salleh Said Keruak said former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad too received Arab money when he wanted to build a university.

Salleh (photo) zoomed in on Mahathir's effort to set up the International Islamic University in Gombak that was expected to cost the government over RM1 billion when he was prime minister.

"To finance what can be regarded as a huge project back in 1983, Dr Mahathir sought the financial support of the Middle East countries and eight countries from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) agreed to sponsor the setting up of the university.

"Taking into consideration the inflation factor, what was worth RM1 billion back in 1983 would be worth many more times that today.

"Therefore, if we want to do exactly the same thing today, what would cost RM1 billion in 1983 would cost tens of billions today," he said in a blog posting today.

Who is telling the truth?

Salleh's remarks came amid Mahathir's criticism of the massive Middle Eastern "donation" received by Najib in his personal account, said to be intended for Umno.

"Who in the world would donate US\$700 million (RM2.6 billion) to the Malaysian Prime Minister?

"Even Obama could not raise this amount for his presidential bid. It was suggested it was an Arab.

"Arabs are generous, but not that generous. I could not raise even a single dollar from them for the Malaysian International Islamic University or for the Oxford Islamic Centre," Mahathir had said in a blog posting on Monday.

However, Salleh said the OIC funding was proof that Mahathir did indeed take Arab money.

"To say, therefore, that Mahathir during his time never sought and received help from the Arabs is not true," he said.