

M'sia a pariah state due to 1MDB issue, says Mahathir
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Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad today branded the country a "pariah state" following what he says is "abuse of law" to cover up the 1MDB case.

The ex-premier was referring to the arrest of his former political secretary, lawyer Matthias Chang under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act for accompanying his client Khairuddin Abu Hassan in lodging complaints against 1MDB abroad.

Mahathir's scathing statement also comes after attorney-general Apandi Ali cleared 1MDB officials of wrongdoing despite Bank Negara Malaysia calling for action.

"In the eyes of the world Malaysia has become a pariah state, a state where anyone can be hauled up and questioned by the police, detained and charged through abusing the laws of the country.

"And the AGs Chambers will dismiss or disregard any report of wrongdoing that involves the prime minister," he said in a blog posting.

"Already the members of the government are saying that no one, not even the rulers may comment on obvious Government abuses of the laws of the country."

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday said no one can push for the 1MDB probe to be hastened and delayed, as the probe must be guided by law.

Zahid said this in response to the Conference of Rulers' decree for the 1MDB probe to be wrapped up and for wrongdoers, if any, to be punished.

Apandi is not a judge

Mahathir said Apandi's (photo) decision to not prosecute the 1MDB officials, despite Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) appeal, is premature.

He said while the AG has powers to decide whether or not to prosecute, he should not have dismissed BNM's investigation given the weight of the matter.

The 1MDB case, he said, is linked to a sitting prime minister.

Instead, Mahathir said, the matter should have been brought to court to be decided upon by a judge.

"Is this the rule of law that this country is supposed to uphold? Is the AG higher than a judge, that his judgement is final and there can be no appeal?" he asked.

“By dismissing this case suspicions will remain in the minds of the people.

In fact people are thinking that the decision of the AG may not be by the AG.”

The Bank Negara investigation was carried out under paragraph (4)(b) of Part 1 of the Fifth Schedule to the Exchange Control Act 1953 namely, knowingly or recklessly making a statement which is false in a material particular.

This is in relation to the transfer of funds beyond RM500,000.

The Attorney-General’s Chambers said it found no reason to prosecute, but did not say why.

In a separate statement, anti-corruption NGO C4 urged the AG to reveal why the case was not brought to court.

"AG Appandi cannot simply put a lid on the 1MDB investigations without providing Malaysians with full details on how he arrived at such a decision," C4 director Cynthia Gabriel said.

It also called on the Auditor-General to reveal its preliminary report on 1MDB and a halt on harrassment on whistleblower.

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