

Minister: Dr M wrong on 'pariah' charge, we follow rules

MalaysiaKini.com

Oct 10th, 2015

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Communications and Multimedia Minister Mohd Salleh Said Keruak has dismissed Dr Mahathir Mohamad's claim that Malaysia has become a "pariah" state because the law is abused to cover up the 1MDB case.

The minister argued that the authorities do not act according to their whim and fancy.

"This allegation (by Mahathir) is baseless, whatever we (the government) do is in accordance with the rules.

"When an individual is arrested under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma), there is basis. We don't simply take action as we like," Salleh told reporters in Putrajaya.

Mahathir made the statement in response to the arrest of his former aide, lawyer Matthias Chang, under Sosma for accompanying his client Khairuddin Abu Hassan in lodging complaints against 1MDB abroad.

"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," remarked the former premier.

Meanwhile, elaborating further, Salleh reminded how Mahathir had, during his time as premier, stressed that it was the government's responsibility to safeguard the country's security.

Therefore, any arrest was not politically motivated, as alleged by Mahathir, he said.

"We have to investigate anyone who intend to undermine the country's political stability. That is most important.

"Our priority is the country's peace and security," Salleh stressed.

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/315258>