

Dr M slams gov't for using OSA 'to hide corruption'

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Continuing his lambast against the administration of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has hit out at the authorities, accusing them of misusing the Official Secrets Act (OSA) to hide government corruption.

“The Official Secrets Act, I believe, is to punish those who leak government administrative documents on policies, cabinet papers and taxation.

“They are for preventing the information from being made used of by individuals, companies or foreign governments to their advantage.

“They are not meant for keeping secret the crimes committed by officers, employees or individuals. Such crimes must be reported or exposed by whoever comes across them. Criminal proceedings should follow,” he wrote in a blog posting today.

The former premier also questioned if authorities are saying that crimes committed by government personnel are government secrets to be hidden from public eye, noting that there seems to be a trend of anyone reporting on the crimes being charged under the OSA or worse, accused of economic sabotage under terrorism laws.

“I would like to hear the AG (attorney-general) state categorically that crime such as embezzling government funds are government secrets which must be protected under the OSA.

“Clarification on this subject is important because the AG is tasked with sending cases to the court for judgment.

“The public will then understand why he dismissed reports by Bank Negara and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission and why he cannot allow the contents of the reports to be seen by anyone. Also the writers of the reports apparently are not allowed to talk about the reports,” concluded Mahathir with his usual sarcastic aplomb.

In recent years the government led by Najib has been seen to have been more restrictive as they move to take action by strengthening existing legislation and enacting new laws to stifle dissent and curb freedom of expression.

Mahathir has made himself the people's champion as he continue to attack the government over these restrictions, though the good doctor himself has been lambasted as ironically doing the same during his 22-year tenure as PM when he was accused of using the Internal Security Act, the OSA and other laws to curb political dissent.

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