

## **Charge LTTE suspects if enough evidence, Mahathir tells govt**

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The Perikatan Nasional government should press charges against the alleged supporters of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) "if they feel that they have enough evidence", said former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

According to Mahathir, when he was in power, the then attorney-general Tommy Thomas had informed him that there was no sufficient proof to charge the suspects under our terrorism law which denied them bail.

He said that was why he had written a letter to Muhyiddin Yassin, who was the home minister, stating that LTTE should be taken out of the country's list of terror organisations.

"Regarding the LTTE supporters, I was informed by the (then) AG that there was no solid evidence to charge them under the terrorism law which does not allow bail while waiting for trial. I gave this opinion to the minister in charge of the matter. My opinion was not an order.

"For me, if the government and the AG of the day feel that there is solid evidence to charge them (the suspects), then they should initiate the appropriate legal action.

"I hope that there won't be any injustice when we uphold and enforce the law," Mahathir said in a statement posted on his blog.

He was referring to the case of 12 individuals arrested by police in October last year for allegedly supporting the now-defunct terror organisation, which was based in Sri Lanka.

Detained under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma), the 12 were later charged in various courts in several states over suspected links to the organisation.

However, on Feb 21 this year, Thomas exercised his constitutional powers to discontinue proceedings against the 12 with immediate effect.

Last week, a Feb 12 letter written by Mahathir to Muhyiddin was circulated on social media.

In the letter, Mahathir said he believed that there was no reason for the

government to continue labelling LTTE as a terror organisation when Sri Lanka had also discontinued labelling them as such.

"I feel that it would be good if LTTE is excluded from the list of terrorists. And thus, the criminal trial can be carried out without denying them from getting bail," he said in the letter.

Mahathir had since confirmed the authenticity of the letter but denied that it meant he supported the group.

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