

**Dr M mum on KTM land, sports betting and Samy
Malaysiakini.com
May 25, 2010**

Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad was a quiet man today, keeping mum about current issues plaguing Premier Najib Abdul Razak's administration.

He sidestepped nearly all questions shot at him by reporters, simply smiling and shrugging when asked about issues that would normally elicit at least a smart retort from the political veteran.

Mahathir's replies were so brief, he left the crowd of reporters perplexed with his uncharacteristic silence over national issues.

The most journalists got from the usually combative elder statesman was a short reply on what he thought should be done about government subsidies.

NONE "It is better to reduce subsidies slowly," he said after officially opening the Aiman Motor Sdn Bhd 4S showroom in Petaling Jaya.

Unlike his fiery attacks on his successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi which would have taken up a good half hour at any given press conference, Mahathir spent barely five minutes to dodge all the other questions that went his way this time around.

When asked about the recent deal between Malaysia and Singapore to move the KTM station in Tanjung Pagar to the border industrial zone at Woodlands, Mahathir simply said: "I don't know what the agreement is about."

He refused to say anything more on the subject, despite the fact that the deal was first agreed upon by both countries in 1991 when he sent the then Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin to discuss the matter with Lee Kwan Yew, Singapore's premier at the time.

On the scheduled end to the Malaysia-Singapore water supply deal next year, Mahathir kept his guns holstered, simply saying it was up to Singapore to extend the contract.

"It's their right (to stop). If they want to continue, they will need the agreement from the Malaysian government," he said.

He took a further step back when asked for his opinion on the proposed sports betting licence mooted by Najib's government, shrugging as he replied that it is "up to the government to decide".

'Internal matter of MIC'

Reporters finally gave up pushing for more substantive answers from Mahathir after he brushed aside a question on the recent move to oust his pet peeve and MIC president S Samy Vellu.

"It is an internal matter of MIC," was his brief reply.

He did however, on his own accord, hit out at Malay AP holders who sold off their permits for a quick buck, calling them "traitors".

Mahathir, who had defended the AP system introduced under the New Economic Policy (NEP) during his tenure as prime minister, stressed that it is up to the Malays to fully utilise the opportunities given to them by the government.

"Those who sell the APs are traitors to the NEP, which was meant to help them.

"They did something bad against national policy. If you go into business properly, you can make money and do better than selling APs," he said.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/132730>