

**Dr M threatens to sue Mkini, Kit Siang, Wain
Malaysiakini.com
Dec 22, 2009**

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said he "reserved the right" to sue author Barry Wain, opposition leader Lim Kit Siang and online news daily Malaysiakini for defamation.

In the latest posting in his Chedet blog, Mahathir said he welcomed the suggestion by Lim who yesterday called for the government to set up a royal commission to probe whether the former strongman had 'burned' RM100 billion on corruption and grandiose projects during his 22-year reign.

"Depending upon the result of the commission, I reserve the right to sue Barry Wain, Lim Kit Siang and Malaysiakini.com for libel for a sum to be disclosed later," he said.

However, Mahathir was quick to add that the royal commission should not be confined to his term as premier but also include his successor-turned-nemesis, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"It should include how RM270 billion of Petronas money paid during Abdullah's five-year term was spent, what projects were financed by this huge fund and the cost of all these projects," he said.

"It should include how much money was lost due to the cancellation of the crooked bridge (to Singapore) and the Johor Bahru to Padang Besar (double-track) railway." In addition, he suggested the royal commission include the cost over-run in the construction of the multi-billion-ringgit Bakun hydroelectric dam project and to investigate the procedure how the contract for the second Penang Bridge was given out.

"Such a commission should not be made up of government nominees but should have as members impeccable people including foreigners and members of Transparency International," he said, apparently with his usual dose of sarcasm.

"I will cooperate fully with the commission," vowed Mahathir.

Release all gov't documents

Wain, who is the former managing editor of *Asian Wall Street Journal*, has estimated in his recently released book '*Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in Turbulent Times*' that Mahathir had squandered up to RM100 billion in his years as PM.

In his blog posting, Mahathir said Wain should provide "documentary proof" for his allegation.

At the same time, he suggested that the government reveal all the relevant documents.

"In order for the inquiry by the commission to be successful, the government must give the undertaking to give full access to the commission to all the documents and accounts of the government over the period 1981-2009," he said.

"There should be no cover-up of any kind."

Mahathir also called for Wain's book, said to be held up in Port Klang by the Customs Department, to be released.

"I am not in need of government protection," he stressed.

Chedet.com has expired

In '*Malaysian Maverick*', Wain wrote that most of the scams, which included a government attempt to manipulate the international tin price and gambling by Bank Negara on global currency markets, occurred in the go-go years of the 1980s.

According to him, direct financial losses amounted to about RM50 billion. This doubled once the invisible costs, such as unrecorded write-offs, were taken into account.

However, some analysts have put the figure even higher.

Time magazine quoted Daniel Lian, a Southeast Asian economist at Morgan Stanley in Singapore, as saying that Malaysia might have lost "as much as US\$100 billion" (RM340 billion) during the Mahathir years.

Meanwhile, Mahathir's blog could not be accessed later this afternoon.

Those who visit his blog are brought to a free domain name website CC.CO displaying the message that "www.chedet.co.cc has expired".

Apparently, the registration of the domain name of chedet.co.cc was not renewed since Dec 12.

However, Mahathir can easily renew the domain name of his blog for free by logging into CC.CO and clicking the renew button.

But a check at 10pm showed that Mahathir's blogsite has been restored.

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