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Mahathir lauds move to declare assets to MACC

PUTRAJAYA: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday commended Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for the move to have members of his administration and their families declare their assets to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

He said that when he had helmed the government, cabinet ministers declared their assets to him.

"I am not sure, perhaps all of them were quite poor then because no one had excessive assets except for (then finance minister) Tun Daim Zainuddin. He was already a millionaire when he joined the cabinet, so he had much money," Mahathir told reporters after a

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delegation from the Malaysian Council of Former Elected Representatives (Mubarak) had called on him at the Perdana Leadership Foundation office here.

Asked if it would be better for ministers to declare assets to the public, he said that in that event, another commission would have to scrutinise the assets.

"I didn't know of other millionaires in my cabinet, but I had an Umno Youth chief who declared his assets ... I found he had a lot of money and asked where he got it from, but he had an explanation," Mahathir said.

To a statement by DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang that Mahathir should be audited for causing the country to

incur RM100 billion in losses, he said: "I don't mind the audit ... not only on Tun, even Tun's son and all Tun's grandchildren."

On PAS Central Committee member Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad's statement that the party was ready to accept a non-Muslim deputy president if necessary, Mahathir said: "Good, they labelled us infidels before for cooperating with non-Muslims. Now, they can accept a non-Muslim as a leader; now they seek the cooperation of non-Muslims. To what extent? It should be the presidency.

"Why not Lim Kit Siang as president? He is a Malaysian, a patriot and he will uphold Islam, he will give allocations to build mosques and so on."