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# Sabah speaker hits out at Dr M

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**'NON-DEBATABLE':** Former PM also appointed friends he trusted, says Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak

**ADRIAN LAI**  
 KUALA LUMPUR  
 adrianlai@nst.com.my



Sabah state assembly Speaker **Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak** says investments are not meant for quick profit but for the long term

**F**ORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been criticised for supporting allegations that businessman Low Teik Jho, better known as Jho Low, was involved in the 1Malaysia Development Board (1MDB) controversy.

Sabah state assembly Speaker Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak said Dr Mahathir, during his premiership, was also criticised about tycoon Ananda Krishnan's involvement in Petronas and the appointment of his friend, Tun Daim Zainuddin, as finance minister.

"When asked about this, Dr Mahathir gave a classic reply. He said, of course he would appoint his friends, whom he can trust. Who would appoint their enemies? Nevertheless, the issue of friends or not is not the issue to be debated," Salleh wrote in his blog, sskeruak.blogspot.com, recently.

The former Sabah chief minister was responding to the former premier, who in his blog, raised questions on the purchase of a private jet by the government and allegations of misappropriation of funds in 1MDB.

Salleh said 1MDB, the country's sovereign wealth fund, had just started and needed time to prove its viability.

Citing an example, he said Singapore's Temasek Holdings, after more than 40 years, was now profitable, having invested in all sectors of the economy with a total portfolio of more than RM600 billion.

"Last year alone, Temasek invested a further RM65 billion, while it divested RM27 billion. Its Total Shareholder Return (TSR) for last year was 1.5 per cent, 9 per cent for the last 10 years, and 16 per cent since it started business.

"Would you consider Temasek a bad investment with such returns compared with the amount of money the Singapore government has invested in it?"

He said investments were not meant for quick profit but for the long term, so that the next generation would have something to benefit from after the oil runs dry.

"And this, too, is what oil-rich countries in the Middle East are doing."

Salleh claimed Dr Mahathir's attacks against Najib were fuelled by a "big political agenda".

"Dr Mahathir has hurled accusations at Najib to persuade the people that the prime minister is a bad person.

"His criticisms against Najib is fuelled by a political agenda. That is why he and his group are plying pressure on the prime minister by bringing up a range of issues."

Salleh also brushed aside Dr Mahathir's claim that Barisan Nasional would lose in the next general election if Najib did not step down as prime minister.

"Personally, I think BN will lose if Najib is not at the helm to lead the charge during the 14th General Election. Najib's openness and good leadership have made him a favourite among Sabahans and Sarawakians."

Salleh said Najib was performing better in the administration of Sabah and Sarawak compared with Dr Mahathir.

"Sabah and Sarawak are more comfortable with Najib because he understands our aspirations.

"He acknowledges our support by giving us important ministerial positions, as well as allocating a lot of funds to both states."