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New campaign to demonise me: Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is a new and more aggressive campaign to demonise him and to show how much Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak is supported by the people.

"Large sums of money are being spent on this campaign. My friend, who visited me in my office recently, is now installed in the PM's Office and is working hard to cover up the wrongdoings of iMDB," he said in his latest blog posting.

He said the first pages of the mainstream media now carried explanations on how the borrowed funds were spent.

"They add up neatly to RM42 billion. Before, criticisms were just ignored. A policy of elegant silence was followed. Now Najib has been advised to answer and explain. However, he lost an opportunity to explain when he did not turn up for the 'Nothing to hide' forum (last Friday)."

Mahathir also said his friend had dropped by at his office to discuss current issues and the latter's worries about Najib's government policies and performance.

"He urged me to do something. But when he dropped by this time, he seemed somewhat changed. He kept on urging me not to 'attack' the PM. I explained why I am doing so. But he persisted in urging me to desist from my efforts at questioning the leadership on the current financial scandal.

"He warned that if I continued I would lose my legacy."

Mahathir said he now understood better why his friend spoke about him losing his legacy.

"He (friend) has been given the

task of demonising me, of destroying what he calls my legacy. I think he and his boss believe that if I become unpopular then my condemnation of the shenanigans involving iMDB would be ignored by people.

"There really can be no explanation on the disappearance of the money supposedly brought back from Cayman Islands - six billion US dollars.

"My ex-friend will have to do better at demonising me if he is to earn titles etc," he added.

Meanwhile, blogger Syed Akbar Ali, in his latest posting on last Friday's Nothing2Hide dialogue, said "the PR guys in the prime minister's team have bungled again".

An ardent follower of Mahathir, Syed Akbar said talk was that Najib's latest image consultant Tan Sri Lim Kok Wing was the one who came up with the idea to hold the dialogue.

"It has become the biggest PR disaster of the century and now people are saying it has become 'Nowhere to Hide'," he said in reference to Najib's absence from the dialogue.

The Crown Prince of Johor also gave his take on the dialogue.

In a posting on his Johor Southern Tigers Facebook page, Tunku Ismail Tunku Ibrahim said: "How can you have a dialogue called 'Nothing2Hide' featuring a person who has everything to hide? Obviously he won't show up.

"For those who have been entrusted with the responsibility, do not blame the people for losing confidence and trust in you, but think of why they no longer have the confidence and trust in you."