

Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	14 May 2015

'Answer your accuser, Dr M'

NST-14/5/2015

SERIOUS QUESTIONS:

Former premier urged to respond to allegations of corruption for sake of his sons and reputation

AINA NASA

KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

FORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been urged to respond to anti-corruption activist Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim's claims of financial mismanagement during his time as the country's premier.

Finance Ministry communications director Mohamad Ezam Mohd Nor said Dr Mahathir should view the claims seriously as they were made by a reputable figure and concerned corruption involving leaders of the time, who were alleged to have swindled billions of ringgit in public funds.

"As an anti-corruption advocate, I have

looked over Tunku Aziz's claims, especially transactions of the shipping company owned by Dr Mahathir's son, (Datuk) Mirzan Mahathir.

"As political secretary of then finance minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, I was able to monitor the issue closely," he said yesterday.

Tunku Aziz had recently questioned the wealth amassed by Dr Mahathir's sons, Mirzan and Mokhzani, citing Mokhzani's company being awarded a project by Petronas and Petronas being forced to buy Mirzan's shipping company.

All this, Tunku Aziz had said, occurred when Mahathir was prime minister and Petronas adviser, raising the question of abuse of power.

"I earnestly urge you (Dr Mahathir) to invite the MACC (Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission) to reopen Mirzan's bailout to clear your own good name," he was reported to have said.

Ezam said he remembered Anwar's concern over the usage of billions in public money to save Mirzan's company.

"The same concern was brought up during ministerial meetings at the time. Among us ministry officers, it was apparent that it was one of the main reasons for the disagreement



Tunku Abdul Aziz Ibrahim accused Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad of financial mismanagement



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says he did not raise loans for his sons when he was prime minister



Finance Ministry communications director Mohamad Ezam Mohd Nor says Dr Mahathir would be wise to answer claims

between Dr Mahathir and Anwar, which eventually led to the finance minister's dismissal," Anwar's former aide said.

He said the people were also waiting to hear Dr Mahathir's explanation as it was an issue involving public funds.

"It would be wise for Dr Mahathir to come forward to answer the claims because it concerns his sons during his tenure as prime minister and as he was directly managing Petronas, a national company."

Dr Mahathir, in a May 6 blog post, had responded to the allegations by saying that his sons were not billionaires and they had not borrowed millions to finance their busi-

nesses.

"Mirzan does most of his business outside Malaysia but was forced to sell his shipping business to Petronas during the financial crisis. Petronas made a handsome profit selling part of the fleet when the economy recovered.

"Petronas' policy is not to answer questions but Petronas' accounts are available and may be examined to verify whether I lie or not.

"Mirzan is not a millionaire. I did not raise loans when I was prime minister to help my sons. If you have evidence, show it," he had posted.