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Dr M: Govt must be free from debt

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Explain 1MDB's finances, reiterates ex-PM

KAJANG: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has no problem with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's leadership as long as the administration is free from debt.

The former prime minister reiterated that the Government must explain what happened to the money and loans taken by 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

"The Government's agenda is to

pay its debts. If the Government manages to free itself from debt, I have no problem.

"However, it is problematic when not only RM1mil or RM2mil is unaccounted for, but it is estimated at between RM14bil and RM20bil.

"Where has the money gone? This is the *rakyat's* money and it will have an impact on the country's finances," he told a press conference after attending a public lecture on youth and nation-building

at the German-Malaysian Institute here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir was asked for his response to remarks by Najib, who had said on Tuesday: "Even though we are pressured and criticised, as a transparent government, I, as the prime minister, with the deputy prime minister and the ministers as well as my colleagues in the administration won't budge or surrender, but will instead remain steadfast and continue to fight, and carve a

million new pathways for the sake of the *ra/cyatand* the country."

The former prime minister also urged the Government to reveal whether 1MDB had transferred any of its funds to Singapore.

"He gave a written statement (in Parliament) that the money is in Singapore but the Singapore central bank has given a contradictory statement," said Dr Mahathir.

Asked to comment on Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Ahmad

Maslan's remarks that he did not have the right perspective on the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Dr Mahathir said: "He takes care of finance, but he does not understand anything about finance."

In Bukit Mertajam, Ahmad denied being warned by top Umno leaders to stop talking about GST.

He said there was no reason for him to stop talking about GST either in Rompin or Permatang Pauh where by-elections were being held.

"If I stop talking about GST, then the Opposition will win," he said.