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Dr M's IMDB blog 'an advice, not an attack'

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by AZREEN HANI

TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamads recent blog post on IMalaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) should be viewed as an advice to improve accountability and transparency in projects that involve public funds, socio-cultural advisor to the government Tan Sri Dr Rais Yatim said.

Rather than dismissing Dr Mahathir's advice as an attack against Prime Minister (PM) Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak, Rais said the former premier's remark was made in the best interest of the nation.

"I believe when he (Dr Mahathir) addressed the issue, his intention is for the government to be careful, to be accountable on projects and dealings which involved public funds," said Rais in a phone interview with *The*

Malaysian Reserve.

"As a statesman who had managed and handled many projects during his tenure as a PM, I think it's not wrong for him to speak out over things which seem unclear and shady. This advice may apply to other projects as well."

He added: "This advice was given in the hope that things will change on IMDB. It is not ill-intended to bring anyone down."

Last Friday, Dr Mahathir, among other things, addressed the issue on how the *rakyat* is still not satisfied with the explanation given by the government on IMDB.

Dr Mahathir also wrote that, if they (the *rakyat*) are still not satisfied and stop supporting Barisan Nasional (BN) in the next election, BN will lose.

"The allegations which have been made against IMDB were

not just baseless accusations. They were accompanied with clear facts, such as the amount of debt, the person who manages it, the parties which received the billions of ringgit, where the investments were done, where the money was saved and in what form," Dr Mahathir wrote.

However, Sabah speaker Datuk Salleh Said Keruak wrote in response to Dr Mahathir's posting by stating that Umno will fall by the latter's doing.

In his blog post on Sunday, Salleh accused Dr Mahathir of having hidden agendas over his attack on IMDB and warned Umno members to not be trapped in one's views.

Still, Dr Rais maintained the fact that IMDB's dealings and overseas investments which appeared to not follow proper procedures should not be

ignored by the government.

The former Jelebu MP also feels that Dr Mahathir's choice to air his views on his blogs so that he could reach to the larger section of the masses.

Meanwhile, Penang Gerakan chief Teng Chang Yeow when contacted said he is not in a position to comment on Dr Mahathir's actions.

"As someone very much junior in politics than he is, I believe he knows better on what he does to the country," said Teng.

"It's not my place to say whether his comments are justified or not."

Admitting that he was not being briefed by the government or any BN leaders on IMDB, Teng said he gathered all the information over the issue from the Finance Ministry, the company as well as the critics.