

# PM: We will ask US to return recovered money

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**JOHOR BARU:** Malaysia will ask the United States to hand over the US\$1bil (RM4.18bil) it has recovered from fugitive financier Low Taek Jho, who is better known as Jho Low.

"The assets were bought with Malaysian money.

"We have proof that this is our money and will make a claim with the US government," said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad after visiting the Bangunan Sultan Iskandar Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Complex here yesterday.

Bloomberg reported that the US Justice Department has struck a deal with Low, in which it will recoup almost US\$1bil of money

derived from the Malaysian investment fund 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

The deal, if approved by a federal judge, will help resolve forfeiture cases tied to Low, whom prosecutors accuse of orchestrating the theft of over US\$4bil (RM16.7bil) from 1MDB.

Dr Mahathir defended the government's decision to sell some of its strategic assets.

He added that he had the authority to do so as the chairman of sovereign wealth fund Khazanah Nasional Bhd, which oversees the assets.

"Basically, we had to sell assets because the previous government

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lost huge sums of money.

"This was in order to raise funds to pay debts left by the previous government as they had borrowed more than RM1 trillion," he said.

In Pontian, he claimed that Umno was a tougher opponent for Pakatan Harapan compared with MCA in the upcoming Tanjung Piai polls.

"Better Umno," he said when asked if MCA would pose a challenge to Pakatan in the Nov 16 by-election.

He was speaking to reporters after an event at SJK(C) Bin Chong.

Asked to comment on Barisan's decision to place an MCA candidate rather than an Umno candidate, Dr Mahathir said: "That's because Umno is afraid to lose."

He added that opposition candidates at Tanjung Piai would not be able to fulfil their promises made during the campaign because they were not the government.

"This by-election is not meant to change the government. Regardless of whoever wins or loses, the government will remain.

"Why do I say this? Because the Opposition will make all kinds of promises. If they win, they would not be able to fulfil the promises anyway because they are not the

government," he said.

"If a Pakatan candidate wins, promises made during the campaigning period will be delivered.

"Our intention is to enrich the people because if wealth is not the same, there would be signs of anger and discontent, which would cause disunity among Malaysians.

"If we can reduce the income gap between the rich and the poor, I'm confident that racial differences will not be a big issue," he said.



Jho Low strikes deal with DoJ  
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