

PM defends use of Act in LTTE probe

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Dr M 'satisfied' with cops' reasoning for using Sosma in Tamil Tigers arrests

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PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is satisfied with the explanation given by the police on the nationwide crackdown on elements linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"The police have briefed me. They have reasons to take action.

"I am satisfied with the actions taken and the reasons that were given," he said after delivering a keynote address at the International Conference on Industry 4.0 at Segi University yesterday.

He said this when asked to comment on Bukit Aman Special Branch Counter Terrorism Division (E8) head Deputy Comm Datuk Ayob Khan's comment on political interference, as DAP leaders had been

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actively criticising the police for detaining their elected representatives and a host of other suspects to assist in an investigation into elements linked to LTTE.

On Kepong MP Lim Lip Eng's criticism against the police for detaining suspects under Security Offences (Special Measures) (Sosma) Act 2012, which Pakatan Harapan hoped to abolish, Dr Mahathir said the Act was still in force.

"In the absence of alternative laws, Sosma Act can still be applied," said Dr Mahathir.

Meanwhile, PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said that there was no need to refer the police to the Parliament's Special Select Committee on Defence and the Home Affairs with regard to arrests of suspects with alleged links to the LTTE.

"My personal view is that there is no need for such (actions). We should give space to the police to investigate crimes and terrorism if any. The police should not feel pressured by too many distractions," he

told reporters after attending a briefing to lawmakers on the work of the Parliament's special select committees yesterday.

He said the discretion to investigate the matter should be left to the police and Home Ministry.

"It is not appropriate to question the police's investigation process," he added.

However, Anwar said that he was against the use of Sosma, a stand consistently taken by Pakatan.

However, he noted that the recent arrests connected to the LTTE and Sosma were separate issues altogether.

Anwar was asked to comment on calls by Lim that the Parliament's Special Select Committee on Defence and the Home Affairs hold an emergency meeting on the recent arrests linked to the LTTE.

Lim, who is also a lawyer, said the parliamentary watchdog must demand the police to explain their use of Sosma in detaining the suspects without trial, a law which Pakatan had promised to abolish.

Meanwhile, asked if PKR supported PAS's call for White Paper on the recent police investigations on the LTTE, Anwar said that investigations were still at the early stage.

"I leave it to the Home Minister and Cabinet to decide on that," he said.

On Sunday, PAS secretary-general Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan proposed that a White Paper be tabled in Parliament on the recent arrests of suspects with alleged links to the LTTE.

Takiyuddin said that the matter is now of "public interest" and that no party should interfere with police investigations.