

PKR shows World Bank records, claims proof Dr M received aid
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 18 – PKR today refuted Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's claims that he had refused monetary aid from the World Bank by furnishing online records of loans made by the global financial body during his tenure as prime minister.

World Bank records provided by PKR showed that Dr Mahathir's administration had accepted financial aid numerous times between May 18, 1982 to Malaysia's post-financial crisis period of March 30, 1999.

This includes three loans for projects inked six months after Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was sacked as deputy prime minister in September 1998.

A US\$300 million (RM953.10 million) loan package, titled the "Economic Recovery and Social Sector Loan Project" was signed on June 18, 1998, according to the World Bank website.

An Education Sector Support Project (US\$244 million), Year 2000 Technical Assistance Project (US\$100 million) and Social Sector Support Project (US\$60 million) was subsequently inked on March 30, 1999.

"If seen carefully, this is clear proof of the World Bank's commitment to Malaysia during Tun Dr Mahathir's administration.

"It should be noted that while still Finance Minister, Datuk Seri Anwar had written to the World Bank, expressing the view that Malaysia no longer needed assistance from the global financial body," PKR's communications bureau said in a statement.

The statement said that the records furnished showed that Dr Mahathir's allegations against Anwar was untrue.

The former PM yesterday issued a challenge to Opposition leader Anwar over a purported letter that the former had written to the World Bank to appeal for funds during the financial crisis in 1999.

Dr Mahathir alleged the accusation as false as he did not write such letter as claimed by Anwar. The former prime minister stressed that he had refused any help offered by the World Bank as this would render Malaysia a 'slave' to the world body, according to Bernama Online.

The former prime minister challenged Anwar to swear on the Qur'an and assured the press present that he was prepared to do the same.

Dr Mahathir, indicated that Datuk Seri Anwar had been in favour of measures recommended by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the financial crisis that

would prove detrimental to the country's financial situation. Mahathir added that his former deputy's judgment was 'clouded' at that time.

The former prime minister's statements were supported by Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop who was one of Dr Mahathir's financial advisers at the time of the crisis.

Tan Sri Nor recalled the advice provided by the World Bank representative who was summoned by the former prime minister.

According to Nor Mohamed, the World Bank had advocated for an increase in the housing loan interest rates, a restriction on the government's spending, and a withdrawal of all loans by Bank Negara to avoid economic crisis.

The recommendations were rejected by Tun Mahathir as the consequences would cause 'bloodshed on the streets'. The former prime minister had subsequently requested for the World Bank representative to leave his office.

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