

## **Dr M: No donations ever went into my personal accounts**

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**By Opalyn Mok**

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 3 — Former Umno president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is contesting the narrative that political donations may be deposited in the personal account of the party's head, saying this had never been the practice during his time.

Acknowledging that Umno's assets are held in trust by three nominees including the party president, the former prime minister said, however, that the funds were kept in a designated bank account controlled by three people.

"Not a single sen from donations for elections were deposited into my account.

"I am prepared for all my personal accounts for 22 years to be vetted by impartial parties to verify if my claim is true or otherwise," he wrote in a blog post today.

Dr Mahathir explained that he shunned the practice of personally receiving funds meant for Umno as the commingling of party and private monies had previously invited problems with the tax authorities.

Citing his experience during the 1964 and 1969 general elections, Dr Mahathir said that funds allocated by Umno for disbursement in his constituency were deposited in his account as he was not comfortable accepting RM20,000 in cash.

This later led to the Inland Revenue Board fining him RM300,000 for failing to declare the income as Umno would not state that the funds came from the party.

"In efforts to sanitise claims that Najib received as much as RM2.6 billion in his personal accounts ostensibly for the 14th general election, I am accused of doing the same.

"This is a baseless accusation, mere slander," he added.

Dr Mahathir added that upon his retirement, he handed over RM200 million in cash and RM1.2 billion in assets to his successor, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has been accused of receiving US\$700 million in his personal accounts.

The allegation first arose in a *Wall Street Journal* article that claimed the amount was channelled from 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) into Najib's bank accounts.

But in a subsequent allegation, former deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin claimed that he was informed by Najib that the RM2.6 billion came from "somewhere in the Middle East."

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