

Political donations never went to my own account, says Dr Mahathir
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It has never been Umno's practice to place money from political donations in the personal accounts of trustees, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today, rejecting claims he had done the same amid the ongoing controversy over billions of ringgit in Datuk Seri Najib Razak's accounts.

Dr Mahathir said while he was the Umno president, he was one of three trustees who ensured that all political donations were deposited into a bank account which was held in trust for the party.

He said he later ensured that all the money, shares and other title deeds in Umno's possession were transferred to his successor, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Not a single sen from funds donated for elections was put into my account.

"Throughout my 22 years (as prime minister) I was prepared to have all my personal accounts examined by those without any vested interest to verify if my claims were true or not," Dr Mahathir wrote in his blog today.

Najib has come under fire after The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) last month alleged that up to US\$700 million (RM2.67 billion) was transferred from funds linked to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) into his personal accounts.

The prime minister has denied ever taking any funds from 1MDB for "personal gain" but has not commented directly on the fund transfers.

However, Najib had blamed Dr Mahathir, whom he accused of working with foreign agents to topple his administration.

Dr Mahathir said today claims that money from political donations to Umno had also gone into his personal accounts were "baseless" and "slander".

The retired statesman recounted his experience in the 1964 and 1969 general elections, when RM20,000 from the Umno headquarters were handed over to him to be distributed to parliamentary and state constituencies.

"Because I was not willing to keep the RM20,000 cash, I deposited it into my account and I issued cheques to the Dewan Rakyat and state assembly election committees in accordance to the distribution amount set by the headquarters.

"The money was not from donors but it was Umno's money that was given to divisions for the candidates to use," he said.

He said when he was expelled from Umno in 1970, the Inland Revenue Board raided his house and clinic and found the stubs of the cheques issued by him.

He was fined RM300,000 for failing to declare his income as the party headquarters refused to admit the money comes from Umno.

"In the end, I was fined RM130,000. At that time, I was already a minister. I paid the fine in installments and finally finished paying it when I became the deputy prime minister," he added. – August 3, 2015.

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