

We won't arrest Dr Mahathir, says IGP
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By Elizabeth Zachariah

Police today denied that they will arrest former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad over his speech and participation in the Bersih 4 rally two weeks ago.

Instead, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar said that it was normal procedure to record the statements of those who have reports made against them.

"I never said we will arrest him. It's just that we had received reports from a few Umno people that Tun, when giving a speech during Bersih, had allegedly said that party division leaders had received bribes," he told reporters in a press conference in Penang today.

"So it is our SOP (standard operating procedure) to open an investigation paper. It is a normal process," he said.

Earlier today, Dr Mahathir had challenged police to arrest him over his speech, adding that he was willing to extend his full cooperation if called up for questioning.

Khalid said, out of respect to the retired statesman, police would not call Dr Mahathir to come to the station to give his statement but would assign an officer to meet him wherever he was.

"I won't ask him to come to my office. We will send our officer to record his statement. We will set an appointment with him," the top cop said.

Dr Mahathir today said that he was willing to extend his full cooperation with the police if called up for questioning.

"I've read in the papers, of course I will go (to the police station).

"If the police call you up for questioning, you must go, that is the way it is here in Malaysia," he said.

Last week, the IGP said that police will question Dr Mahathir over defamatory statements he had allegedly made at the Bersih 4 rally.

He said the former prime minister will have his statement recorded for defamation under Section 500 of the Penal Code, which carries a two-year jail term, a fine, or both, upon conviction.

During the Bersih 4 rally, Dr Mahathir and Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali had been present on both days of the 34-hour protest. – September 9, 2015

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