

**I never used power for personal gain, Dr Mahathir tells daily
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Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he only used his executive powers while in office to quell violent racial divides, and not for personal gain.

In an interview with The Guardian, the retired statesman said he had done things that did not seem democratic when he was prime minister but insisted that his actions were for the greater good of the country.

"During my time, yes, there were things that I did that were maybe not considered democratic and all that, but my job was to ensure that the race relations in this country remained healthy," he was quoted as saying by the daily.

"To that extent, I never used (the powers) for my personal gain, for trying to acquire funds in an illegitimate way. That is an abuse of power."

Dr Mahathir was referring to accusations that he was the one who began using repressive laws like the Internal Security Act to silence his critics, setting the stage for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to do the same.

The Guardian noted that the Committee to Protect Journalists had, in 1999, 2000 and 2001, listed Dr Mahathir as one of the 10 worst enemies of the press.

However, Dr Mahathir is now Najib's chief critic, accusing the prime minister of corruption and abuse of power repeatedly calling for his resignation.

Najib has come under fire over his brainchild 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), which has racked up RM42 billion in debts in just six years since its inception.

He has also been accused of allegedly using his power to stop investigations into the state-owned investment vehicle by removing former attorney-general Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail. Gani was also the head of a special task force probing the debt-ridden fund.

Dr Mahathir recently accused Najib of not respecting the principle of separation of powers between the legislative, executive and the judiciary, because of the latter's intervention in the 1MDB investigations. – October 23, 2015.

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