

Zahid denies Umno out to get Dr Mahathir arrested
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By Muzliza Mustafa

Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Umno was not out to get Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrested over his hard-hitting blog post against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali.

The deputy prime minister and Umno vice-president distanced the party from a recent police report promoting an investigation to be opened against Dr Mahathir.

"It has nothing to do with Umno. Please get the IGP (inspector-general of police)," Zahid said after officiating the Halal Cosmetics and Personal Care Products Industry Forum.

Dr Mahathir said yesterday he believed Umno was issuing a warning through its new information chief by saying he could be arrested for criticising Najib and Apandi.

In his blog post, the former prime minister said it was obvious that Tan Sri Annuar Musa had said the continuous criticism was an attempt to get him arrested.

"The new information chief suggested that I'm doing this because I want to be arrested.

"It's a warning like it's their wish to arrest me," he wrote in an article titled "Corruption in Malaysia".

Annuar on February 6 had commented on one of Dr Mahathir's blog posts, saying the former prime minister was waiting for the authorities to take action against him in an attempt to gain sympathy.

"I was surprised when I read Dr Mahathir's statement on his blog which was obviously seditious in nature," he said.

"I really don't know what's his real intention. Is this his political strategy to gain sympathy?

"It could also be that Dr Mahathir thought he is immune from any penalty and that made him to ignore the law in his attempt to topple Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak."

Annuar also warned that the authorities needed to take action against Dr Mahathir if there were police reports lodged against him.

Failure to take action would only show that the authorities were taking sides.

Annuar said those who knew basic law would know that Dr Mahathir's post on the

February 3 titled "AG to AG" was seditious in nature.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar yesterday said police were investigating Dr Mahathir for criminal defamation over a recent blog post on Apandi.

He said police reports had been lodged "one or two days ago" over the post.

He previously said police would start investigations if there were reports lodged on the matter.

"I am not sure how many reports have been lodged but they were lodged one or two days ago.

"We have started investigations for defamation under Section 500 of the Penal Code."

Section 500 of the Penal Code touches on defamation and carries a two-year jail term, a fine, or both upon conviction.

In a February 5 blog post, Dr Mahathir had attacked Apandi over his decision not to charge the prime minister, saying the country's top prosecutor had no credibility.

He also said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak should resign if Malaysia was to regain its reputation.

"To clear Malaysia's good name and his own, Najib must prove beyond a shadow of doubt that he is innocent of all the accusations against him. The A-G saying he is innocent means nothing.

"He, the A-G, has no credibility. Failing this, Najib should resign," Dr Mahathir said.

The former prime minister has been criticising Apandi since the A-G's decision last month not to press charges against Najib over the RM2.6 billion donation and the Finance Ministry-owned SRC International Sdn Bhd, citing a lack of evidence.

Dr Mahathir said the A-G had acted as both judge and prosecutor in the matter, and accused him of being under Najib's control.

He also criticised Apandi for closing the case on Bank Negara Malaysia's findings on 1Malaysia Development Bhd's inaccurate declarations for overseas investments.

Dr Mahathir was earlier investigated for defamation after making statements at the Bersih 4 rally last year. – February 16, 2016.

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