

I'll remain free despite Najib's efforts, says Dr Mahathir

Free Malaysia Today

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Pakatan Harapan chairman Dr Mahathir Mohamad claims BN wants to use the forex scandal to have him arrested so that he'll be out of the picture come GE14.

PETALING JAYA: Dr Mahathir Mohamad is confident he will not be arrested under any circumstances prior to the next general election (GE14).

Mahathir said while the Barisan Nasional (BN) government may try to have him arrested using the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) formed to probe the forex losses suffered by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) in the early 1990s, he believes he would remain a free man until GE14.

"They don't just want to discredit me. I think they want to arrest me so that I will be out of the picture when the general election takes place.

"What he wants to do is to get rid of me. So far he has not succeeded, but I think he will cook up something," Mahathir said, referring to Prime Minister Najib Razak.

"But even if they charge me, the hearing in court will take a long time. In the meantime, I'm free to campaign.

"I will be a free man, until the general election," the 92-year-old, who is also Pakatan Harapan chairman, told reporters at an open house organised by DAP's Zaid Ibrahim, here today.

He was asked to comment on the RCI, which was formed to investigate the central bank's forex loss in the 1990s, when he was prime minister.

Putrajaya had said among other things, that the RCI will recommend the appropriate action to be taken against those found to be directly or indirectly involved in the scandal.

The RCI has been given a three-month time frame to complete its task and submit a report to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Meanwhile, when asked if he was prepared for the prospect of going to jail, Mahathir said, "I can't help it, if the rule of law is no longer applicable in Malaysia".

“People lodge a report about him (Najib) to the police, and that person gets arrested and charged in court for terrorism.”

It is believed that Mahathir was referring to the charges made against former Batu Kawan Umno division leader Khairuddin Abu Hassan and lawyer Matthias Chang, who last year were detained under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 over alleged sabotage of financial services.

They were accused of doing so by lodging various police reports against state-owned 1MDB to international authorities in Singapore, Switzerland, France and Hong Kong.

Mahathir also denied allegations that he was responsible for the BNM forex scandal, saying he knew “for a fact” that while he was the prime minister at the time, BNM had acted independently.

He said he couldn’t be held responsible for the faults of the central bank.

“We investigated, we published all our findings, we didn’t hide them under the Official Secrets Act. Then, we debated it in parliament, where any allegations of wrongdoing were dismissed.

“So, if they want to charge me, they can. But they cannot arrest me for no reason,” he added.

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