

## **Ministers, deputy ministers, political secretaries, officials must declare assets**

**BERNAMA**

**08/06/2018**

PUTRAJAYA, June 8 (Bernama) -- Cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, political secretaries and government officials must declare their assets to the Prime Minister.

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said when making the announcement that agencies entrusted with corruption prevention would be privy to all the information.

"The prime minister cannot conceal corruption committed by officers or administrators," he told a media conference after chairing a Cabinet Committee Meeting on Government Management Integrity at Perdana Putra here today.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Home Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng, and Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption Centre (GIACC) director-general Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed.

Dr Mahathir said the meeting also decided that government officials must not hold more than five positions.

According to the prime minister, the government found that some officials were holding up to 68 positions in various companies.

"This will be reduced, cannot be more than five; in fact we don't even encourage two or three.

"Actually one position should suffice but we cannot avoid needing some officials to hold positions in government subsidiaries," he said.

Dr Mahathir said government administrators and high ranking officers were also not allowed to receive any gift. Action would be taken against both the giver and receiver.

"If anyone wants to give me a gift, I won't take. I'm afraid of Abu Kassim. But can gift me with flowers, food or fruits, not more than that. We will refuse, cars and all," he said in jest.

On his choice of Abu Kassim to head the GIACC, Dr Mahathir said he considered the D-G's experience in corruption prevention, and past service as Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner.

"He also has international experience related to several other anti-corruption agencies, and we will use the United Nations' guidelines on strategies to combat corruption," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the MACC would remain as an independent body to fight corruption in the country even with the establishment of the GIACC.

"Coordination yes, but no cooperation," he replied when asked whether GIACC would work hand in hand with MACC.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said Pakatan Harapan (PH) was serious in its efforts to curb embezzlement in the administration which had caused the government to lose a considerable amount of funds.

"One case involved a company supplying electrical items to a school in a RM1 billion contract. The company did not do anything but had already claimed the money from the government," he cited.

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