

Dr M says authorities can probe his children

The Sun - 10/8/2006

by R. Manirajan
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PUTRAJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday said the authorities were free to investigate how his children had accumulated their wealth.

"Go and investigate (my children). Of course, my children were billionaires during my time," he said sarcastically.

The former premier insisted he had never helped his children in their business dealings when he was in power.

He said this when asked about the wealth of his own children after he had again questioned the business interests of Kamaluddin Abdullah, the son of the prime minister.

Asked about the interview Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had on TV3 on Monday, he said: "He (Abdullah) never answered any questions. All he was saying was that I am a good man, I wouldn't do this, my children are good people and they wouldn't do this, I am a very religious man, I wouldn't do this. But specific answers, there were none.

"Certainly, to say his son has no business in Malaysia is wrong. His son has got business worth more than one billion (ringgit)."

Mahathir said he will unearth evidence of corruption against the government.

Mahathir was speaking to reporters after presenting a speech at the Fifth Perdana

Discourse Series, themed "Positioning Malaysia in the world arena" at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here.

He urged the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) to investigate without fear or favour, alleging that there was political interference.

"I know that agency had investigated one person, but there was a cover-up. During my time, I thought action was going to be taken, but it was not taken."

Asked if it was a cabinet minister, he said: "At one time a cabinet minister during my administration."

He repeated that Abdullah must get rid of the group of young special assistants around him and questioned their ability to write good speeches for him.

"I write my own speeches ... I don't allow people to write my speech," he said.

Mahathir also defended his human rights record, claiming that he never had anyone arrested under the Internal Security Act for political reasons.

"As for *Ops Lallang* (in 1987 when more than 100 people were detained) I can tell you I told Lim Kit Siang he would not be arrested, but then the police arrested him so I cannot just tell the police don't as they have their reason to do so.

"At that time they were playing up Chinese racial sentiments, and that's why they were detained. Not political, I don't detain political opposition and personalities under the ISA, I release them."