

PM - STAR

83 8
KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 21, (BERNAMA) -- (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY HE HAD ANTICIPATED THE LOCAL DAILY-THE STAR - TO SENSATIONALISE THE REPORT ON UMNO DELEGATES CRITICISING HIM FOR EXPRESSING HIS SUPPORT FOR HIS DEPUTY DATUK MUSA HITAM.

"IF STAR DID NOT DO IT, I CUT MY FINGERS" HE SAID AMIDST LAUGHTER FROM REPORTERS DURING TEA BREAK AT THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

HE ADDED: "WHAT IS STAR FOR, AND WHAT DO YOU EXPECT OF THE STAR?"

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS COMMENTING ON THE STAR'S HEADLINE "MAHATHIR UNDER FIRE" WITH THE REPORT THAT THE DELEGATES HAD USED THE WORDS LIKE "AUTOCRATIC" WHEN CRITICISING THE PRIME MINISTER.

THE STAR TOO BECAME THE BUTT OF A JOKE BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED FOR TEA BREAK WHEN THE CHAIRMAN, DATUK SULAIMAN NINAM SHAH, SAID THAT THE PAPER WRONGLY NAMED HIM IN A CAPTION OF A PHOTOGRAPH. -- MORE 1230/II

ZCZC ND35 (F/S)

PM - STAR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

HE TOLD THE STAR: "YOU BETTER MAKE A CORRECTION. THE DELEGATE PORTRAYED IS NOT ME BECAUSE I DO NOT HAVE BEARD AND MOUSTACHE AND I AM MORE HANDSOME THAN HE IS."

"INCIDENTALLY HE IS MY SON AND IF THE STAR DOES NOT HAVE MY PHOTOGRAPH, FEEL FREE TO TAKE ONE NOW," HE ADDED TO LAUGHTER FROM THE DELEGATES. -- BERNAMA 1233/II