

There isn't 'anything much' to be said Dollah's views his own-PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.
— The views expressed by the MP for Kok Lanas, Datuk Abdullah Ahmad, when he spoke on Malaysian politics in Singapore last Sunday were his own, the Prime Minister said here today.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he did not think there was "anything much" to say on what Datuk Abdullah said.

Datuk Abdullah's speech on *Issues in Malaysian Politics* at the Institute of International Affairs in Singapore has met with protests from some non-Malay circles, including the MCA and Gerakan.

By NURAINA SAMAD

The MCA Youth lodged a police report at the Jalan Bandar Police Station here on Saturday against Datuk Abdullah.

The report, lodged by its political and publicity bureau chairman, Mr Tang See Hang, who is also the Selangor State Assemblyman for Rawang, called on Umno to take disciplinary action against him.

In Ipoh yesterday, Gerakan president Datuk Dr Lim Keng Yaik, in condemning the speech, said: "No true Malaysian will ever agree with or accept Datuk Abdullah's speech even though he's an MP.

"His speech is the kind of statement that makes everyone angry as it only shows disrespect for the

Rukunegara and our country's needs," added Datuk Dr Lim, who is also the Minister of Primary Industries.

Gerakan national organising secretary Samuel Raj called on Dr Mahathir, as Barisan Nasional chairman, to suspend Datuk Abdullah as an MP.

Asked to comment on these reactions during a Press conference here, the Prime Minister responded: "In the first place, they were his personal opinions and, secondly, it was said in Singapore.

"Similar opinions have been expressed by the Chinese and Indians regarding their own status.

"So, I don't think there is anything much in what he said."

On the reaction from

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some political leaders to Datuk Abdullah's speech, Dr Mahathir said that in a free society the people could voice their opinions.

"It all depends on the people... I don't stand in the way."

On the MCA Youth's police report against Datuk Abdullah, he said: "Well, Datuk Lee Kim Sai (MCA deputy president) has said that we should not be sensitive... now who is sensitive? I don't know."

Then, in a somewhat lighter vein, the Prime Minister, who returned home yesterday after attending the Non-Aligned Movement (Nam) Summit, said: "I'm a bit confused. I've just come back from Harare, which is 4,900 feet above sea level and the air there is rarefied.

"But here I'm coming down to earth again!"

Meanwhile, Umno Youth leader Anwar Ibrahim said that Datuk Abdullah's statement should be viewed in the context of statements by both the Opposition and the Barisan Nasional on certain policies, especial-

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ly before the general election.

"He had only reacted to these statements. Therefore, I don't see why his statement should be made into a big issue."

He said if the earlier statements by other people on accepted policies could be considered not seditious and sensitive, there was no reason why Datuk Abdullah's statement should be seditious.

Encik Anwar also regretted that the MCA had lodged a police report over the matter.

"Though we are free to lodge police reports, in cases like this they could have discussed or voiced their grievances through the proper channels," he said.