

Mahathir on PM's post and party elections

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. —
The Prime Minister can
decide whether or not he
wants to step down, should
he lose in the contest for
the Umno presidency, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mo-
hamad said today.

Asked to comment on
the view that technically,
even if he lost his bid for
the presidency, he need
not step down as Prime
Minister, Dr Mahathir
said:

"Technically, the Prime
Minister can make the de-
cision himself whether or
not he wishes to resign.

"However, if he (the
Prime Minister) does not
want to resign, then the
others can move a vote of
no confidence in the De-
wan Rakyat (saying) that
they have no faith in the
Prime Minister.

"The Yang di-Pertuan
Agong will then determine
who the Prime Minister
will be, based upon the
person who has the highest
confidence of the House,"
he told reporters after
opening the 16th anniver-
sary celebrations of Ko-
operasi Shamelin Bhd at
Wisma Tunku today.

On a complaint by Wan-
ita Umno chief Datin Pa-
duka Rafidah Aziz on
women delegates being of-
fered a \$10,000 bribe to
vote against Dr Mahathir
which subsequently was
rejected by the Umno elec-
tion Code of Ethics com-
mittee, Dr Mahathir said it
was the committee's right
to do so.

"Maybe the Minister
had information about the
bribe but the others did
not want to believe...It is
up to the ethics committee.

"Many people make alle-
gations based on informa-
tion received but if the
others do not want to ac-
cept this, it is their right.
Just because the commit-
tee said there was no
proof, it does not mean
that the allegation was
baseless," he said.

Asked about an alle-
gation that the Kedah Umno
Liaison Committee had not
permitted Datuk Musa Hi-
tam to visit the State last
week, Dr Mahathir said it
was not true that the party
did not permit Datuk Musa
to visit them.

He said he had asked
Kedah Mentri Besar Da-
tuk Othman Aroff about
the matter and was told
that Datuk Musa wished to
visit the state on April 10
when the MB and other
Umno leaders had to be in
Ipoh for the opening of
Umno House.