

Govt to release documents on three projects

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THE Government has declassified documents relating to at least three projects to enable the people to know the "true picture" regarding them. These are the Proton Saga, Dayabumi and Penang Bridge.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that the records on these projects will be made available to the public.

He told reporters after launching the 16th anniversary celebrations of Shamelin in Kuala Lumpur yesterday that anyone, including the mass media, could apply to obtain the documents from the ministers concerned.

"Some people have alleged that the decision on these project was made by me (alone). But all the information relating to the decision-making process, such as who took part in the deliberations and views expressed are contained in the minutes of the Cabinet and the National Action Council's meeting," he said.

Dr Mahathir said misconceptions among the people regarding the projects could be corrected by declassifying the documents.

He said: "According to the provisions in the Official Secrets Act, the minister, including Prime Minister, or official concerned can declassify those documents from the official secret list if he deems it appropriate.

"Some of these documents have already been declassified but have not been released. We can release or publish some parts of the documents, if necessary," he added.

He said the Government is not going to release all documents but only those considered necessary to correct public views.

During his address to Shamelin members the Prime Minister said he was obliged to disclose some personal letters written to him if the sender was saying the opposite of what is contained in the letters.

He said if this was not done there was a

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possibility those who committed offences would escape punishment merely because the offence was kept secret.

Dr Mahathir also disclosed that some groups in Umno plan to hold a fresh general election if they win the party election on April 24 to ensure that Members of Parliament belong to their group.

Asked about the matter, Dr Mahathir said he was only repeating what he had heard from other people. I am not sure whether they were serious or whether it is part of their campaign tactics, he re-

plied.

Asked whether he would continue as Prime Minister if defeated in the party election, Dr Mahathir replied: "It is the prerogative of a Prime Minister whether to resign or not, but if other people want him to resign they can move a vote of no confidence in the Dewan Rakyat.

"If the Prime Minister no longer enjoys the confidence of the House, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong can appoint someone who enjoys the confidence of the House as the Prime Minister," he added.