

Dr M: Kit Siang started it

LANGKAWI, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he had raised the issue of the DAP and Islam recently only because DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang had made earlier statements on sensitive subjects.

"He started it, not me," the Prime Minister told reporters at the Langkawi International Airport here today when asked to comment on a police report lodged by Lim against him.

Lim lodged a police report against Dr Mahathir at the Petaling Jaya district police headquarters on Wednesday for allegedly accusing him (Lim) of being anti-Islam. Lim claimed that the accusation had endangered his life and safety.

Asked to comment on a resolution passed at the Second Malaysian Chinese Economic Congress urging the Government to abolish Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera status as early as possible to foster greater national unity, Dr Mahathir said:

"That is their call. Whether we entertain it is a different matter. It is up to us to make the decision."

The resolution was one of the 10 passed at the congress after a two-day deliberation.

Later, in Kuala Lumpur, Dr Mahathir said the DAP's access to Government's secret documents on issues like the Telekom shares controversy could be due to an "inside job".

He said he was disappointed and sad over the

matter. However, he warned that action would be taken if there was evidence that civil servants had acted irresponsibly. It was unfortunate that Government employees might be supplying information to opposition parties, he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked by reporters on how the DAP, especially Lim Kit Siang, could get the Government's secret documents and whether there was a possibility of an "inside job".

Earlier, the Prime Minister flagged off the Petronas Rally of Malaysia 1992 which started at the Merdeka Square.

He said although there was such a possibility, it was quite difficult to gather the information and evidence to charge the culprits. However this did not mean the Government would not take action against the officers involved, he added.

He believed that the officers were doing this with the intention to tarnish the image of the Government.

If Lim was found to have the secret documents, a cation could also be taken against him, Dr Mahathir said.

However, the Prime Minister said the Government would investigate the allegations even though they were made by the DAP if there was a basis to do so as it believed in searching for the truth.

"For example, the Vijandran (pornographic) videotape and the (City Hall's) Volvo issues. We follow the

normal procedures because we do not want people to be blamed just like that. They may not be guilty and as such the allegations will tarnish their names.

"On the other hand, if there is a basis for the allegations we will have to rectify the situation," he said.

Dr Mahathir also commented on the City Hall employees union's statement that it had evidence that senior officers supplied information to opposition parties regarding the purchase of 22 Volvos by City Hall.

He said if they (the union) had the evidence, they could hand it over to the Government.

Access to some documents was not restricted to senior officers, the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir said he would not interfere in the issues surrounding the purchase of the Volvos since it was being investigated.

"I am afraid that if I interfere, my name might be used for purposes that may be in conflict with the legal process," he said.

On Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's call that the Harisan Nasional use its two-thirds majority in Parliament to amend the Federal Constitution enabling those wanting to embrace Islam to do so just after reaching puberty and not after the age of 18, Dr Mahathir said it was just a political gimmick.

He said Tengku Razaleigh was trying to defend DAP while on the other hand, he was trying to satisfy Pas.