

Counting of votes can be improved, says Dr Mahathir

By Manan Osman

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there are weaknesses in the Election Commission's vote-counting system which can be corrected in future.

He also said that he was not satisfied with certain aspects of the running of the election. He quoted the instance of someone who was fined RM7,000 and was still allowed to contest, in obvious reference to DAP MP Wee Choo Keong.

Wee who was fined RM7,000 for contempt of court was allowed to contest for the Bukit Bintang parliamentary seat in the recent general election.

"We found that there were some weaknesses (in

the counting system). This, however, can be corrected in future," he said in response to questions from newsmen at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang on his return from a week's visit to Japan.

The Prime Minister said that the statement by the Election Commission that it would not carry out a recounting exercise without a court order was the commission's stance as an independent body.

He said this when asked to comment on the statement by Election Commission chairman Datuk Harun Din that the commission would not carry out a recount.

Asked for his views on the handling of the last general election, Dr Ma-

hathir, who is the Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said: "There are some aspects that we are not satisfied with."

He said if necessary, the BN would refer certain cases to court. One of them is the case of a person who had been fined RM7,000 by the court but was still allowed to stand for election.

He said in areas where the BN lost by a slim majority but felt it should have won, it might seek legal redress or "other means".

Asked on the latest leadership crisis in the People's Progressive Party (PPP), a BN component party, Dr Mahathir said the PPP should be able to resolve its problems.

"As far as we know, the Registrar of Societies re-

cognises PPP under the leadership of M. Kayveas," he said.

However, Dr Mahathir said PPP members should not seek position through legal means but must be popular with party members.

PPP assistant secretary-general K. Chandra Kanth was reported as saying that an emergency meeting of PPP Central Executive Committee yesterday ruled that Kayveas was not a member of the party.

Kanth had said that Kayveas' application to join the party in 1990 was not approved as it did not have a proposer and seconder.

He also said that PPP would be considered as a BN component party member as long as it did not go against the BN.