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It's the High Court's decision, says Mahathir

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Malacca High Court's decision against Democratic Action Party's (DAP) Kota Melaka Member of Parliament (MP) Lim Guan Eng on two counts of maliciously printing false news is a High Court decision.

"That is a High Court decision ... I don't have any comment," he told reporters after launching the Malaysia Challenge, a world sailing grand prix in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Yesterday, the court found Lim, who is DAP deputy secretary-general, guilty under the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984 for maliciously printing false news in a pamphlet entitled "Kisah Benar" (True Story) in January 1995 and under the Sedition Act 1948 on a charge of inciting the public that Malaysia practised double standard during a forum in Malacca, also in January that year. Lim was fined a total of RM15,000.

When told by the press that certain quarters thought the court's decision was too harsh on the MP, Dr Mahathir said: "You (the press) are trying to fish for some remarks so that you can blow up (the news). I don't have any comment."

He said the opposition will usually say that whenever the Government did something, it is something wrong.

Asked if the High Court's decision could be politically motivated, Dr Mahathir said: "His (Lim) criticisms were also politically motivated ... he criticised because it is politics. He criticised the Government also because of politics."

Dr Mahathir said Lim's action to criticise certain people was also politically motivated.

"Why is it that others who are not interested in politics do not make any comments? Because they are not politicians.

"They (opposition) will always say that when other people do something, it is politics. When they (opposition) do something, it is not politics."

Asked what message he had for the opposition with regards to the court's decision, Dr Mahathir said: "The message is that our court is unfair to the opposition. That is what the press will read, anyway.

"Of course the press will read that anything against the Government is very fair and anything against the opposition is unfair. So what is there to ask me when you have already made up your mind?"

Asked on Lim's status as Kota Melaka MP following the court decision, Dr Mahathir said: "I don't know."

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