

# PM: No transparency under Anwar

THE Finance Ministry, under the tenure of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, never practised transparency by disclosing the names of those who were awarded projects, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"This is unlike what is done by my ministry," the Prime Minister said in reply to allegations by Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang that there was lack of transparency and justice in the handling of the Anwar issue.

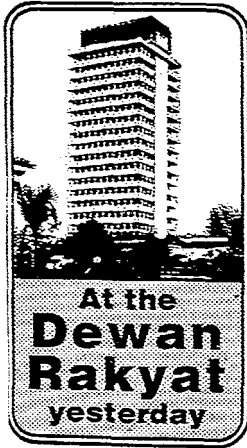
During the recent Umno General Assembly, the Prime Minister had released the names of those who obtained shares and were awarded privatised projects.

During the debate on the Securities Industry (Central Depositories) Amendment Bill, Dr Mahathir and Lim had a verbal exchange for almost an hour on the Anwar issue.

Lim complained about the short time that MPs had to study the bill, saying the Government had "railroaded" the tabling of the bill.

"What we need is the rule of law, not rule by law," he said, claiming this was similar to what had happened to Anwar.

"I'm not here to defend the Permatang Pau MP. But what we have are laws but not the spirit behind it. There is no justice anymore in our govern-



Reports by FOO YEE PING, SHAHANAAZ SHER HABIB, LEE YUK PENG, SHAMSUL AKMAR, WAN HAMIDIHAMID, JACQUELINE ANN SURIN and P. BALAKUMAR

ment administration," he said.

At this point, Dr Mahathir asked: "What is the rule of law? Is it to create chaos, give a picture of unrest to the foreigners and collaborate with them?"

Lim maintained that his stand was clear that "the sacking of Anwar and his detention was not fair."

He then questioned Malaysia's appointment of Salomon Smith Barney, a US investment bank, as financial adviser, saying they were dewas who were

huge speculators in "betting" against the Hong Kong dollar.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that the police did not want to arrest Anwar under the Internal Security Act.

"But then he went to the National Mosque, instigating the people to create disturbances."

Lim also questioned if the Government had proof that Anwar had asked his supporters to riot, adding, "is it fair for the Prime Minister to make such accusations when the former deputy prime minister is not here to defend himself?"

Dr Mahathir acknowledged that Anwar did not tell his people outright to riot.

"But it is his manner of whipping up emotions to hate some people. He is a well-known orator who knows how to use words to stir up emotions. He knows the implications of his speech.

"As a result, the people went to PWTC and my residence and created disturbances," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said that Anwar had used the "pre-empting strategy" by claiming from the onset that he would be arrested under the ISA in a bid to cover his own offences.

He reiterated that Anwar was his friend and that he initially did not believe the accusations

against him.

He said there should be no threats about rioting and that the court should be allowed to decide on the case.

"I can say Anwar is in the wrong. Many people can also say that, but there is no legal power.

"As the Prime Minister, I can say he's wrong. I punished him. In Umno, if someone is guilty, we drop him. We don't wait for the court to decide (before taking action on matters concerning the party)."

"Even in the past, some members who were not found guilty but had affected the image of the party we asked them to quit."

He also said that the Prime Minister could not be equated with the judiciary but any country gave the right to the leader to remove someone.

Dr Mahathir said that the wearing of ski masks by the *Unit Tindakan Khas* was similar to what was done in other countries like Britain and South Korea.

"You do not complain about this. What foreigners do seems right but we can't do a similar thing. There's no nationalism at all."

He said Lim's support for Anwar was a *quid pro quo* arrangement, with Anwar backing efforts to free jailed Kota Melaka MP Lim Guan Eng.