

Don't pinpoint blame for Lunas defeat: Dr M

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By **Seema Viswanathan**
seema@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat: Barisan Nasional's loss in the Lunas by-election may be attributed to a lack of knowledge among party insiders about government policies, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

However, there are other elements that caused the defeat, and judgment must not be made before the report on the coalition's performance in the by-elections is complete, he added.

Mahathir, speaking after visiting the Ministry of Land and Cooperative Development, was commenting on former deputy prime minister Tun Ghafar Baba's statement yesterday on the reasons for the failure.

Ghafar had said that BN workers were not properly informed of the policies and could not explain to the people about the vision school

concept, among others.

Mahathir said that pin-pointing others for the failure and making rash decisions because of disappointment at the loss would not be wise.

"At the end of an election, when we have lost, we will naturally be disappointed. But decisions made at that time will not be smart ones.

"We have to wait, study all the factors involved and only then can we identify who went wrong and who didn't."

Mahathir said when he underwent a heart operation, his doctor had advised him not to make any decisions until after recovery.

"He said that in the first few days (after the operation) you will think that the world has come to an end.

"But after some time, you realise that the world is still spinning at the same rate. It hasn't changed at all because you are sick and the same thing applies here," he said.

Mahathir also said the Umno deputy Youth Chief

Datuk Aziz Sheikh Fadzir's decision to resign because of finger-pointing following the defeat was made "too early".

"On hindsight, I think he has changed his mind," Mahathir said.

He said although some people threaten to resign from their positions because they have something to gain from doing so, Aziz did not gain anything from his act.

Meanwhile, Mahathir said the government will take action against people who use mosques to spread political messages because it disturbs people from praying in peace.

"Sometimes during the *teraweh* prayers they stop for a *tazkirah* (religious sermon). But they use that time to campaign for PAS.

"They are disturbing the people who want to pray. They want to perform the *teraweh* prayers but are forced to listen to a political speech," he said, adding that this sometimes happens at the Subang mosque.