

# Mahathir refutes claim of rift with Daim

**KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is no rift between him and Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin.

He was asked to comment on a foreign news report that the "rift" had led to the appointment of Bank Negara adviser Datuk Nor Mohamed Yakcop as his special adviser.

"There have been these reports about a rift between me and Tun Daim for ages.

"Ever since Tun Daim joined the government, they have been telling me he doesn't get on well with me and yet in time of crisis, he joined the government

and helped to resolve some of our problems," he told a press conference at the end of the first day of the Umno General Assembly.

Mahathir said there was also talk that Daim was not getting along with him even before this.

"But somehow or rather, we still smile and hug each other. We still run the government and I think, quite successfully too," he said.

Asked if there is any indication from Daim that he will resign, Mahathir said the finance minister has always made it clear that he would serve the government temporarily because of shortage of talents in the field of finance.

"But once the economy is turned around and brought to the usual old pace, I think he might want to resign and that was the condition when he came into the government.

"He (Daim) has always made it clear that he doesn't want to stay in the government forever. Unlike others, he doesn't even vie for any post in the party," he said.

On whether this will happen anytime soon, he said: "I don't know. You pray for the economy to turn around and we achieve 8% growth every year.

"I am quite sure he will say 'well that's enough, I have done my part and I'll be going off'."