

# PM SLAMS BAR COUNCIL

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'Political agenda behind  
proposal for tribunal  
to investigate Eusoff'

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the part of the Chief Justice. Eusoff has since defended his behaviour, saying that he paid for the holiday himself and showed reporters bills for expenses of his trip.

Mahathir also said the Bar has blown the issue out of proportion. "There are some bad intentions behind this issue. It wants to put the government and the judiciary at loggerheads. By doing so, it hopes that judges will make judgments that are not good for the government.

"We never have complained although there have been many judgments against us . . . we accept it because we believe in the freedom of the judiciary. But it looks like the people who say we don't give freedom are the ones who want to control the judges and want the judges to bow to them."

On his visit to Japan, Mahathir said it was very productive and he found that investors there are interested in the Multimedia Super Corridor and are expected to be more active in the project.

"I met Prime Minister (Yoshiro) Mori, attended the memorial for (Keizo) Obuchi, saw the industries that are relevant to us, got many ideas and met business people."

Commenting on Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov's request for help in the region's conflict with Russia, Mahathir said he wants to find out more about what Malaysia can do for the peace process there.

By SEEMA VISWANATHAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues: The issue of Chief Justice Tun Eusoff Chin's alleged misbehaviour is being politicised by the Bar Council, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"There is some political agenda (behind the Bar's proposal for a tribunal to investigate the case), and it may be connected with other things that are happening in the country," he said after returning from Japan this evening.

Mahathir also said he doesn't see the need for a tribunal.

"If they want to terminate a judge, the procedures are in the constitution. I don't know if this (the tribunal) process follows the law or constitution."

Mahathir, who had been on a week-long working visit to Japan, also said the Bar's action looks like an attempt to get the Chief Justice sacked.

"Before, when we took action to terminate a judge, the Bar vilified us. If it accused us of firing a judge whom we don't like, it is doing the same.

"What's the difference. If it can do it why can't we. I don't understand this," he added.

(In 1988 Tun Salleh Abas was removed as Lord President by a tribunal).

The Bar said it would propose, at an extraordinary general meeting on June 23, that a tribunal or royal commission of inquiry be set up to investigate Eusoff's alleged misbehaviour in relation to a holiday to New Zealand in 1994.

The Bar also proposed that the Chief Justice be suspended pending the investigation.

The issue started late last month when Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Rais Yatim commented on a photograph of Eusoff and lawyer Datuk V.K. Lingam in New Zealand in 1994, hinting at possible misbehaviour on

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