

# 'All for political gain'

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## Dr Mahathir: Certain quarters spreading rumours

KUALA LIPIS, Thurs. — Certain quarters were trying to make political gains from the fighting among residents in Kampung Lindungan outside the Federal Capital, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said these people had spread rumours of many people being killed in the hope that it would lead to widespread unrest, not just in the area, but in other settlements too.

The Prime Minister said: "Certain quarters are purposely blowing the clashes out of proportion by spreading rumours that hundreds of people have been killed, hoping that this will cause anger among the communities.

"They hope the clashes will

continue and we know that if this is prolonged, like what happened in a neighbouring country, there is a possibility the Government will be toppled," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, was speaking at a Press conference after a dialogue with leaders and members of the Lipis and Raub Umno divisions at the Lipis Umno building here.

He was asked to comment on the latest developments following clashes among residents last week in the area besides the reported assault on Tuesday night in Puchong involving four men.

He said there was also a possibility that the incident was an attempt to raise tension among the people.

In an immediate follow-up action, police arrested four people, three in Petaling Jaya and one in Taman Medan, believed to be connected with the incident.

Following last Thursday's clashes, six people have died, 26 hospitalised and 220 arrested, of whom 53 have been released on bail.

Seven Indonesians have been handed over to the Immigration department for deportation.

Asked whether the rumour that the death toll had exceeded six, as released by police, was another attempt to incite the people, Dr Mahathir replied in the affirmative.

"That's why we have been advising the people not to spread rumours because they are created for some specific purposes.

"Because of this, we know of people wanting to come to Kuala Lumpur after rumours that the Malays there have been attacked," he added.

"Those behind the rumours created the stories themselves ... they are not in the position to know more than the police.

"The authorities know how many have been killed and injured," Dr Mahathir said.

The police have lodged a report against those they believed to have circulated a higher death toll than publicised.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob were also present at the Press conference.