

Proof needed on allegation: Dr M

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Report of swindled money used during polls to be verified

By **Ferida Abdul Kudhus**

PUTRAJAYA, Mon: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is a need to prove the allegation that part of the swindled RM40 million fund for the hardcore poor was used during the 1999 general elections in some parts of Kelantan.

Commenting on a newspaper report today which quoted sources, the prime minister said he will wait for the report to be verified

first.

"Sometimes people will make all kinds of accusations without proof."

He said this after attending a meeting with ulama and religious teachers here today.

Asked whether the government will impose stricter conditions pertaining to the fund, Mahathir said: "We have done everything correctly. But there are some unscrupulous people who will try to find some ways to cheat."

Bukit Aman CID direc-

tor Datuk Salleh Mat Som had today postponed a scheduled press conference on the matter to tomorrow.

On Saturday, a company director was remanded for 10 days to assist in police investigations into the RM40 million allegedly misappropriated from a joint-venture farming project under the Rural Development Ministry's programme for the hardcore poor in Kelantan and Terengganu.

The director was arrest-

ed in Penang on Friday by a team of officers from the federal police commercial crime division in Bukit Aman.

Rural Development Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid had lodged a police report last month after the auditor-general in his 2000 report stated that there were weaknesses in the programme for the hardcore poor.

It was also reported that people who owned houses and cars were receiving aid under the programme.