

Conversation with PM private, says Ong

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thu. — MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat today denied he was reprimanded by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at a private meeting last week.

They met on Dec 13 before Ong went on annual leave.

At a press conference today, he said: "It's not that I'm trying to be mysterious, but our conversation is privileged information."

Ong said he had been motivated to seek Mahathir's advice after a veterans' committee concluded

that he had instigated the Youth AGM fracas on Aug 3.

"He (Mahathir) appointed me deputy youth and sports minister, so I sought his ear to brief him on the true nature of the AGM incident," he said.

Ong admitted giving Mahathir a copy of the MCA Youth investigating committee's report on the fracas but declined to comment on the prime minister's reaction.

He dismissed as "vicious speculation" claims that he had been censured, and lambasted detractors who had accused him of

dragging Mahathir into what was the MCA's internal affair.

"These people don't even know what transpired between me and the prime minister ... how can they arrive at such a conclusion?" Ong asked, adding that the conjectures are grossly unfair and prejudicial.

On the rumours of his involvement in the AGM incident, Ong said: "Lies will remain lies and nothing will make them true. It is for the delegates to distinguish between what is true and false.

"Even before the establishment of the veterans committee, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and others had already concluded that I was responsible for all that had happened.

"But as MCA Youth chief, why would I shoot my own foot?"

On another matter, Ong said MCA Youth will mobilise its election machinery following the death of Indera Kayangan assemblyman Datuk Khor Liang Tee last night.

Khor was the Perlis MCA chief.