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Daim not under any investigation, says Dr Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Tun Daim Zainuddin is not under any investigation, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today, ending widespread rumours that the former Finance Minister has been arrested or placed under police investigation.

"He is not being investigated. Maybe they have asked him (questions), I don't know.

"Now that I am the Minister of Finance, I want to know more details about certain things. I do not know whether this is the reason why anybody should ask him anything, but he met me yesterday, there is no problem," Dr Mahathir said when asked to comment on rumours that Daim has been investigated and arrested.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said this at a Press conference held after he briefed selected delegates attending the 55th Umno general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Since his resignation as Finance Minister and Umno treasurer on June 1 after a two-month leave, Daim has been a persistent target of speculation and rumours - that he had either been arrested or was called for questioning (by the police).

Dr Mahathir said when Daim met him yesterday, he (Daim) said that he was going ahead with his resignation.

"He handed to me all party accounts as he was no longer party treasurer.

"You see ... there is no problem. This is not the first time he met me. He met me once before as there are certain details which he had to give me and brought all the files with him."

Dismissing any tension or hostility between him and Daim, Dr Mahathir said he was "not at war with Daim". He also denied there was any "issue" between them.

"Daim issue? No ... There is no issue at all. He said he wanted to resign and I gave him two months to think things over. Then he was of the opinion that he needed to resign and he resigned.

"If he does not attend the Umno assembly, it is not because he is no longer an Umno member, he is. It is just that he is no longer the treasurer but if he doesn't want to attend (the assembly) that is his business.

"If he attends the assembly, he will meet the Press and they all will ask him many things.

"Yesterday when he came (to meet me), he ran from the Press.

On whether the delay in announcing the new Finance Minister was because he was having problems finding a replacement, Dr Mahathir said: "Yes, that is why I said I am still looking for a suitable replacement.

"If I can get one, then that will be fine but if I cannot, it is still all right as I am now shouldering the work of the Finance Minister.

"If there is problem, anybody who does not receive any money ... I have to sign every document ... read every document," Dr Mahathir said jokingly.