

DATE: 08/04/2008

The sun - 8/4/2008
**The day Mahathir
was left speechless**

PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was shocked and speechless when former Anti Corruption Agency director-general Datuk Shafee Yahya angrily and loudly accused him of interfering in the agency's investigation into the then director-general of the Economic Planning Unit in 1998.

The former prime minister said he had summoned Shafee to inquire about an ACA raid on the office of the EPU chief.

"I did that because I received a complaint from the director that the ACA had been very offensive towards him during the raid," Mahathir said in a letter to *theSun* yesterday.

"I knew that government officers were sometimes over zealous and would overstep or abuse their authority," he said in response to a letter by former United Nations rapporteur Datuk Param Kumaraswamy (*theSun*, April 2) which referred to testimony by Shafee in the corruption trial of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in the High Court in June 2000.

Param's letter contained a transcript of Shafee's testimony in which he said Mahathir interfered in the investigation and accused him of trying to fix the former DG of the EPU.

In his reply, Mahathir said he could not verify whether there was any truth in what the EPU director said. Accordingly, I called the director of the ACA to find out what actually happened.

"I asked many questions, many more than what he said in court. I also asked him if he had been directed by Datuk Seri Anwar to carry out the raid.

"He denied it but he became angry when I asked whether he intended to pursue his investigation. Raising his voice, he accused me of trying to stop him from carrying out his duty. Angrily, he said that he was a senior civil service officer and that I had no right to question him about his work.

"I was shocked at his loud accusation against me. No civil servant, however senior, had spoken to me like that. I was rendered speechless."

to close the case?
Witness: Yes, the Prime Minister did.
Counsel: Narrate the circumstances under which the PM asked you to close the investigation.
Counsel: Were you called up by the PM?
Witness: Yes. I was told off, "How dare you raid my senior officer's office?" I was taken aback and I replied, "This was based on official complaint (sic) by an aggrieved party." I did what was officially required under the law. He accused me of trying to fix the former DG of EPU. I replied that is totally wrong because it is wrong in law to fix anybody. As a Muslim it is a big sin to fix anybody. He asked me, "Did Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim ask you to raid the office?" I said, "no". It was based on an official complaint and to be fair to Dato' Seri Anwar when I mentioned the complain against the EPU Chief. I inform Dato' Seri Anwar of my intention to raid but he said, "Have you cleared this with the PM?" I said, "I mentioned it to the PM." The PM kept on...



Shafee (left) greets Mahathir during the launch of Anti Corruption Act in January 1998