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Name the leaders, Karpal dares Dr M

PETALING JAYA: DAP national chairman Karpal Singh has dared Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to give the names of opposition leaders the former prime minister met before the *Ops Lalang* crackdown in 1987.

"If Dr Mahathir does not respond to my challenge within seven days, it must be presumed that he is not telling the truth.

"It is a very serious matter for a former prime minister to lie," Karpal said in a statement here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir had claimed in a recent book that he had met opposition leaders before *Ops Lalang* and had assured them that they would not be arrested.

He commented in the book, *Dr M: Operation Malaysia - Conversations with Mahathir Mohamad*, that the 1987 crackdown was a police decision.

The comment drew flak from DAP stalwart Lim Kit Siang, who denied that Dr Mahathir had met him and other opposition leaders.

Speaking to reporters on Saturday, Dr Mahathir stood his ground and said he had no reason to make the claim unless the meeting had taken place.

Karpal said the former prime minister's claim that the arrest was a police decision could not be true because Dr Mahathir, who was also Home Minister then, had signed the detention orders after the police made their recommendations.