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Police record Dr M's statements

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KUALA LUMPUR: Police yesterday spent 30 minutes recording a statement from former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad over his remark that the king and Malay rulers were under house arrest.

Four police officers from Bukit Aman interviewed Dr Mahathir in his office at the Albukhary Foundation building here.

One of Dr Mahathir's lawyers, Ahmad Bazlan Che Kasim, said his client was questioned under Section 500 of the Penal Code for defamation over his remark.

He said the police took a statement from Dr Mahathir in the presence of three lawyers and 37 questions were posed to him.

"He answered all the questions. About 80 per cent of those questions were related to the Dr Mahathir-Lim Kit Siang Declaration," he said, adding that Dr Mahathir's answers were simple and straightforward while the lawyers advised him not to answer certain questions.

Asked if Dr Mahathir would be called again for questioning, Bazlan said the police did not indicate what they planned to do next.

"The recording of the statement was carried out in a cordial and laid-back manner," he said.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir, when asked if he was worried about police wanting to see him, said: "I am worried all the time."

"Yes, they (the police) are coming today (yesterday).

"This is the third time they are questioning me," he said.

Commenting on the private member's bill on syariah court amendments tabled by Pas president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, Dr Mahathir said it was "unIslamic".

"They are trying to do something that is unjust, cutting off a Muslim's hand when a non-Muslim gets two months' jail.

"What they are proposing is un-Islamic," he said.