

Najib on why documents were declassified

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BANGKOK: The declassified confidential documents on the bridge to replace the Johor Causeway, which were released in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, were part of a series in the Government's explanation to the people on several issues, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said yesterday.

"This is the Government's explanation through the Prime Minister's Department," the deputy prime minister told reporters after attending the Malaysia-Thailand Joint Border Committee meeting here.

The documents released by the Prime Minister's department comprised correspondence be-

tween former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and two former Singapore prime ministers, Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong, and extracts of the record of the meeting between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Goh in Kuala Lumpur in March last year.

The documents were declassified to allow the people to understand why the Government decided to abort the bridge project and to set the record straight on a string of allegations raised by Dr Mahathir.

Asked to comment on the spiralling world crude price which was now US\$78 (RM286) a

barrel, Najib said the Government will not increase fuel prices.

He said prices would remain at current levels for the rest of the year as the Government had promised.

"So, even if the price of crude oil continues to increase, we will keep to our word," he said.

On Cuepacs' refusal to accept a Public Service Department's proposal to scrap the pension system and replace it with contributions to the Employees' Provident Fund, Najib said: "I hope Cuepacs would not close all avenues for further discussions.

"The Government will also continue to listen to Cuepacs' views.

We must have an open attitude on this and I hope Cuepacs will continue discussing the matter with the department."

On Israel's bombings of Lebanon, Najib said this would aggravate the situation in the Middle East and bring about more problems.

"We do not agree with Israel's actions since they are punishing innocent people," he said.

"Israel should have instead taken steps that could stop any form of extremism, and our stance remain the same in that we support a two-state solution and do not condone terrorism or the use of force by any parties."