Who have misled or given wrong information to Mahathir and Liong Sik making them believe that the DAP and Chinese newspapers have been condemning Indonesia for the atrocities and brutalities like the organised mass gang rapes of women and children

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Media Statement
***by* Lim Kit Siang**

(Petaling Jaya, *Thursday*): I am very surprised by the statement by the MCA President and Transport Minister, Datuk Seri Dr. Ling Liong Sik saying that the call by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad a day earlier to the DAP and Chinese newspapers to stop condemning Indonesia for the atrocities and brutalities, like the organised mass gang rapes of women and children, was "correct" and should be taken seriously.

I fully agree that when the Prime Minister makes such a call, he should be taken seriously and the DAP is prepared to take it seriously. However, the DAP is mystified as to why Mahathir has made such a call as the DAP had never condemned the Indonesian Government or Indonesian nation over the atrocities and brutalities - as what we have done is to condemn such crimes against humanity like the organised mass gang rapes against women and children.

As far as I know, the Chinese press have also not condemned the Indonesian Government or Indonesian nation for such brutalities and atrocities, also focussing their condemnation against the perpetrators who had committed such crimes against humanity.

Mahathir's call on DAP and Chinese newspapers to stop condemning Indonesia for the atrocities and brutalities had come as a surprise, and Liong Sik's support for Mahathir's call as "correct" and that it should be taken seriously is another surprise.

It is clear that both Mahathir and Liong Sik had been misled or given wrong information to make them believe that the DAP and the Chinese press have been condemning the Indonesian Government or Indonesian nation for the mass gang rapes against women and children, when the condemnation is on the atrocities and brutalities.

There should be an investigation as to who had been so irresponsible as to mislead or provide wrong information to Mahathir and Liong Sik making them believe that the DAP and Chinese newspapers have been condemning Indonesia for the atrocities and brutalities like the organised mass gang rapes of women and children.

In making such a misleading statement, Liong Sik has raised the question whether the condemnation of the organised mass gang rapes of women and children in Indonesia by low-level MCA officials as well as by MCA Youth and MCA Wanita have the full support of the top MCA national leadership.

In fact, Liong Sik should declare whether the MCA Ministers agree that the Malaysian Government must not be seen to be practising double-standards in its international policy by refusing to condemn the brutalities and atrocities perpetrated on women and children in Indonesia, when Malaysia had been in the international vanguard to condemn similar brutalities and atrocities perpetrated by Serbs against Bosnians.

If so, then the MCA Ministers should ask the Cabinet to take an official position to condemn the brutalities and atrocities against Indonesian women and children and to raise these brutalities and atrocities in international meetings as conduct which are completely unacceptable and intolerable by a world on the threshold of the new millennium and trying to promote a global civil society.

It has been reported today that Indonesian President B.J. Habibie plans to introduce a law banning racial discrimination, where the use of pribumi and non-pribumi will no longer be allowed.

Meeting a group of key Indonesian Chinese businessmen following sharp criticism for his remarks in which Habibie said that if the Indonesian Chinese who fled the massive rioting in Jakarta did not return, their place

could be filled by Indonesian businessmen, Habibie reaffirmed his commitment to guarantee the safety of the Indonesian Chinese with the help of the Indonesian Armed Forces.

It is clear that President Habibie must take quick and convincing action to assure all groups in Indonesia have a role in Indonesian society so that the Indonesian people could unite to face and overcome the Indonesian economic crisis and develop the nation.

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*Lim Kit Siang - Malaysian Parliamentary Opposition Leader, Democratic Action Party Secretary-General & Member of Parliament for Tanjong