

# Casino ban for Muslims

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun.**  
— The Government is taking steps to ban Muslims from the Genting Highlands casino.

Speaking to reporters today, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad also did not rule out the possibility that the casino would eventually be closed down.

But he stressed that the Government would ensure that the Genting Highlands resort as a business enterprise would continue to survive and it "must be supported."

The proposed ruling to ban Muslims from the Genting casino did not come as a sur-

prise as it was one of the first steps expected to be taken by the Government in its move to inculcate Islamic values.

The Prime Minister, who is also Umno president, said that whatever decision is made, careful study would be made first to avoid any serious repercussions.

"Things like this require time for us to respond to the situation. It requires time before it can be implemented," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government would see that Genting Highlands as a big business enterprise would not collapse and that a lot of people who depend on it, includ-

ing the 4,000 employees, would not be made redundant.

He declined to comment on rumours that a decision had been made a month ago to convert Genting Highlands into a recreational park.

The Genting Highlands casino and holiday resort was opened in 1971 and attracts thousands of gamblers from all over the country and Singapore annually.

On the future of other forms of gambling such as Sports Toto, 4-Digit and the Social Welfare Lottery, he said the Government is studying their implications.

## Pressure

Their shutdown would have adverse effects and like everything else, they have their pros and cons, he said.

But he added that he preferred the public to leave such issues to the Government for a final decision. "These are emotional issues and the public could subject the Gov-

ernment to pressure that would prevent it from taking any rational move."

"We are running a government, not a reform movement," he remarked.

On calls by Umno delegates that the Government take over Carcosa, the residence of the British High Commissioner, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir declined to comment.

Carcosa, a colonial mansion set on 18 acres of land in the exclusive Tasek Perdana area, was presented to the British government after Malaya received its independence in 1957.

On criticism by a delegate regarding the extensive land area usually given to embassies, the Prime Minister said the Government cannot take unilateral action as it has to consider whether Malaysia's embassies in other countries received as much space.

• "These arrangements are reciprocal," he said.