

# PM: Don't hamper govt efforts with the law

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JOHORE BARU, Fri. — The law should not be used as a tool to hamper the Government's development efforts, **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today.

"If this country is going to progress, the law should not be used to frustrate necessary actions, particularly by the Government," he said.

The Prime Minister and Barisan Nasional chairman was speaking to newsmen at the end of his two-day official visit to Johore. He had earlier chaired a closed-door meeting with State

Barisan leaders.

In his Press conference, Dr Mahathir also spoke on:

● **HIGHWAY** tolls and said that the Government was not obligated to provide alternative routes to such roads if none existed; and

● **WHY** Umno had to venture into business.

He also urged Barisan parties to use proper channels in voicing their feelings.

Dr Mahathir said the toll system was necessary for new highways as "one way or another, you have to pay for these roads."

"There is no such thing as free facilities. The Government has no money. All facilities will have to be paid for by the people using them.

"The question that arises is who pays," he said, adding that his comments on this subject when opening the Senawang-Air Keroh toll highway recently had "apparently gone unnoticed."

Asked if the Government would be prepared to do away with tolls and instead incorporate this in road tax, he replied:

"This can be done if you want people who do not use the highway to pay for those who are going to use it.

"But the increase in the road tax will be about double in order to pay for the highways. If the people are prepared to pay double, or 10 cents more per litre of oil, then we can do that.

"I'm quite sure (however) there will be howls if the Government says you have to pay 10 cents more per litre of oil."

He said the Government had no plans to build new

roads as alternative routes to the toll highways. "If there are no such routes, the Government is not responsible to provide them," he said.

The Prime Minister also said there was "no conflict" between the Federal and Selangor Governments over the proposed imposition of toll along Federal Highway (to be known as Federal Highway Route Two after it is widened).

"That is a matter which can be resolved between the State and Federal Governments," he said on Se-

langor Menteri Besar Datuk Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib's appeal to the Federal Government to review the decision.

He brushed aside suggestions that Selangor was taking a "hardline stand" over the matter and said he had received a letter from Datuk Muhammad on it.

"We will study (the issue) and we will resolve this matter. There is no problem," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, also com-

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# Dr M: Umno needs to raise funds

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mented on Tunku Abdul Rahman's call to Umno not to enter into business but to concentrate on politics.

The first Prime Minister had made the call in his weekly *As I See It* column in *The Star* on Monday when commenting on the North-South Highway project and the awarding of the contract to United Engineers (M) Bhd, a company controlled by an Umno holding company.

Dr Mahathir said: "We agree ... but who is going to pay the \$360 million for the Umno complex (in Kuala Lumpur)?"

"It is not right to say Umno has not been involved

in business in the past. We have always been in business because of the need to raise funds.

"Alternatively, we can raise donations from the people but there are accusations that Umno is accepting bribes, so this is also wrong.

"If anyone has a solution to this situation, I would like to know."

Dr Mahathir said there were some people running businesses which actually belonged to the party and sometimes these businesses were not registered in their names but under those of proxies.

When the proxies died, however, the property was

taken over by those who inherited the businesses and not by the party, he said.

"In this way, the party loses," he added.

On the Barisan, Dr Mahathir reiterated his call to leaders of component parties to avoid making public their stand on particular issues, adding that the coalition had a proper channel to deal with these issues.

"For the past 40 years, the Barisan and its predecessor, the Alliance, have managed to solve almost all issues through consultations and I don't see any reason (why) the existing issues cannot be resolved in the same manner," he said.

To a question, he said the

Barisan had no plan to take action against leaders who spoke out but added that his appeal in Alor Star two weeks ago to do away with excessive politicking had to a certain extent been effective.

He stressed that Barisan members should refrain from capitalising on political and petty issues so as to "calm down the situation" and should instead get on with the job of helping the country in its economic recovery.

Dr Mahathir said he repeated this appeal during his meetings with Johore Umno division chairmen here yesterday and Barisan leaders today.