

Judges should not air 'views' publicly: Mahathir

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KUANTAN, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that High Court judge Datuk Harun Hashim should not have commented publicly on the Constitution.

"If he has his own personal views, that's his problem. But he should not voice it publicly," the Prime Minister said.

At a seminar last Saturday, Datuk Harun, referring to another seminar on the Constitution, said the participants were not asking for a redraft when they called for a review. They were only seeking a review of the implementation, he had said.

Dr Mahathir said judges should not publicly air their views on matters relating to politics.

He said if a judge had spoken out on an issue which later came before him in a case, then the people would have no confidence in him.

Such a situation would not be healthy for the judiciary in the administration of justice, he added.

Dr Mahathir was elaborating, at a Press conference, on his statement yesterday that certain judges had gone beyond their bounds by encroaching on the roles reserved for the other branches of government.

He said these judges were no longer adhering to their rightful role of administering justice in a democratic system and remaining politically neutral.

He had also said that the country would face chaos if members in a certain branch of government encroached on the roles of other branches.

Dr Mahathir said he did not intend to meet the judiciary to discuss the problem because it was not his right to "offer advice to the judiciary."

"That right rests with the head of the judiciary," he said.

He regretted that certain judges had involved themselves in making statements on the issue of the review of the Federal Constitution which was initiated by those opposing the Government.

By doing so, they could be seen to be involved in the efforts of those opposing the Government, he said.

"And this raises questions among the people as to whether these judges are leaning towards the opposition," he said.