

# Professionals told: Don't be side-tracked

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The Prime Minister tonight criticised professional associations which have been "attracted by side issues" which had little or no relation to their profession.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said he would like to see professional bodies concerned more about upgrading their professions "rather than dabbling in business which is none of their concern".

"There are far too many associations which started off as associations of professionals but become attracted by other side issues and use the associations or the name of the associations for purposes that had nothing to do with the professions that the associations represent," he said.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the 34th anniversary dinner of the Master Builders Association of Malaysia (MBAM) at Shangri-La Hotel here.

He praised MBAM for having pride in the construction profession and for upgrading and modernising the industry.

Earlier, he presented the honorary MBAM life presidency to the president, Tan Sri Yeoh Tiong Lay, and gave away 16 gold medals and 17 silver medals to long-serving members of the association.

Dr Mahathir, who is an honorary life member of MBAM, said the Government would consider the association's proposal that the prices of building materials be reviewed.

"The proposal is noted and we will look into the matter to see if it can be implemented.

"If it is sound, it will be given due consideration," he assured the members.

Tan Sri Yeoh, in his speech earlier, said local builders managed to lower the building cost from an average of \$100 per square foot (psf) to \$70 psf even though the cost of raw materials remain high.

He hoped steps would be taken to ensure the prices of materials are reviewed at appropriate levels to give a boost to the building industry.