

# Dr Mahathir, Razaleigh exchange views freely

By AZAM ARIS

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah sat down yesterday to their first "unity talk" — with clear indications that both leaders are willing to meet again to discuss ways of forging greater Malay unity.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting at Parliament House, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said both leaders exchanged views freely but did not agree on the way to achieve unity.

"I must say that I did not expect very much to happen from this meeting. There is no point of agreement but I still found the meeting useful," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir.

The main obstacle in the unity talk seems to be the question of reviving the old Umno. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said there is no need to revive the old Umno as all Malays are invited to join the present party.

Tengku Razaleigh wants the old Umno to be revived which he says can be done by reversing, through Parliament, the High Court judgement declaring the party illegal.

However, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this could not possibly be done as the Government would not want Parliament to be the "last" court in the country.

"In this particular case it involves the party which forms the Government and if it uses its majority to favour itself, then we are not acting in fairness.

"What happens if the court makes a decision in favour of the opposition. We can then take the case to Parliament and reverse the decision so that the opposition is deprived of the court's decision.

Whether we are biased for or against the opposition is the same. We cannot use Parliament that

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way," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that the law can be changed before the court makes a decision and not after arriving at a judgement.

"For example when Petronas took over Bank Bumiputra it was found that the article pertaining to the registration of Petronas did not allow the national oil corporation to involve itself outside the petroleum industry.

"Since it was necessary for Petronas (to take over Bank Bumiputra), we made provisions . . . but before the court decided. Had the court decided then we would have not been able to do so. Parliament must not be there to do the powers of the court," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister said 100 per cent unity cannot be achieved but Malay unity is already strong through Umno, adding that "what we like to achieve is greater unity".

Bernama adds: Tengku Razaleigh proposed that he and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir meet again to seek a "formula" to unite the Malays on a wider scale.

"In a bigger context, I feel all Malays should be brought together. This is our (Semangat 46) hope," he told reporters after the 45-minute meeting.

Tengku Razaleigh described the meeting as "good" and said it enabled him and the Prime Minister to give their views on achieving Malay unity. He said they also discussed problems which prevented them from being united again and looked into ways of overcoming them.