

# Dr M: We'll deport illegals from Sabah

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**GENTING HIGHLANDS, Thurs.** — The Government will make every effort to deport Filipino and Indonesian illegal immigrants in Sabah who now total 50 per cent of the population. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We will identify who these illegal immigrants are and take the necessary steps to deport them," he said.

"However, it must be

done humanely. We cannot simply load them onto a ship like animals and send them home," he added.

He was speaking to newsmen after a closed-door meeting with top Government officers to discuss current issues at the Awana Golf and Country Resort.

He was asked the Government's reaction to the statement by Sabah Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Kurup yesterday

that the illegal immigrants would make up 70 per cent of the population by the year 2008.

Dr Mahathir had said last week that the illegal immigrant problem was serious and the Government, despite certain problems, wanted to see that all of them were evicted from the State.

The Prime Minister said that the Government was facing problems in controlling the illegal immi-

grant problem because of Sabah's long coastline.

"This coastline makes it difficult for us to stop the entry of the immigrants because they could land at so many places" he said.

"And when we deport them today, they will be back in the State the following day," he added.

On the call by Semangat 46 leader Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah that a Royal Commission of Inquiry be set up to investigate the fin-

ances of all political parties, including Umno, Dr Mahathir said he did not see such a need.

"If every time there is an issue and we have to form a Royal Commission of Inquiry, then, we will not be doing any other work," he quipped.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said that Tengku Razaleigh, as a former party treasurer, knew where the movement obtained its finances.