

Government may allow rallies

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs.
— The Government may consider allowing the holding of public rallies if the police can guarantee they will not lead to chaos, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Replying to newsmen after chairing the Barisan Nasional Supreme Council meeting, Dr Mahathir said the Government had not made any study whether to allow public rallies during

the forthcoming general election.

"However, we do not see any advantage in holding rallies. But if the police can guarantee that rallies would not lead to conflict or chaos, we might consider it," he said.

However, Dr Mahathir noted that in the recent Pantai Merdeka by-election, the situation there became tense because the Opposition always took the law into its own hands by

arresting people for alleged wrongdoing.

"Under our laws, a citizen cannot arrest another person. He must report to the police if he believes another person has broken the law.

"But in Pantai Merdeka, there were some members of the Opposition parties who arrested Umno members for alleged wrongdoing," he said.

The Prime Minister also

related another incident in Terengganu when a police party was confronted by some members of the Opposition who wielded pangangs when they (the police) wanted to arrest a person who had committed an offence.

Dr Mahathir said if incidents such as these were allowed to happen, the country would surely face problems during the general election.