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# Mahathir denies any rift with the King

PENANG, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today there is no rift between him and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah.

The Prime Minister said certain quarters were trying to divide him and the King by claiming that their relationship was strained.

"It is only politics ... they are using every means, including the royalty, for their political interests," he told a press conference after meeting

State Umno liaison committee members here.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on Tunku Abdul Rahman's article in the latest issue of *Aliran* that his (Dr Mahathir's) absence at a Conference of Rulers meeting on Feb 28 had given an impression that the Government and the monarchy were not working together.

The Tunku also said the people might even conclude that the Government was trying to boy-

cott the Conference of Rulers.

He cited Article 38 (3) of the Constitution that whenever the Conference of Rulers deliberated on national matters, the King "shall be accompanied by the Prime Minister and the Rulers and Governors shall be accompanied by their Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers respectively."

The Tunku said there were two other occasions which he considered a

show of disrespect for the Rulers.

He said this was during the King's official visit to the Prime Minister's office on March 19 and the Home Ministry on April 17, when Dr Mahathir (who is also Home Minister) was not present on both occasions.

On the Tunku's ties with Semangat 46, Dr Mahathir said he still respected the Tunku as an individual in his efforts

for the country's well-being.

Dr Mahathir said the Opposition, even before they achieved power, were showing their cruelty by acting against those who were against them.

On rumours that the Sabah Assembly might be dissolved to allow fresh elections, Dr Mahathir said it was up to the individual state to decide as the Federal Government could not stop it from doing so.