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GOVERNMENT MAY REVIEW WORK OFFERS TO LEGAL FIRMS

Mahathir - lawyers

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 13 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government might ~~and later offer~~ offer work to legal firms which adopted anti-government attitude.

+ We do not; want to force them to support the government but we need not support firms which do not support us,+ the Prime Minister told reporters after chairing the UMNO Supreme Council meeting here today.

He was asked on the suggestion by UMNO Youth that the government review its policy in offering work to legal firms to exclude those adopting anti-government attitude.

To another question, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the government would not go +lawyer bashing+ if some of them had not run down the government overseas.--more

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He said the Bar Council could not deny this as the government had sufficient proof through their statements criticising the government overseas.

+If they do not want us to bash them, then they should not bash us... we stop bashing each other,+ he said.

Asked on the possibility of introducing non-custodial sentences for minor criminal offences, he said a study on the matter was being carried out to determine the form of sentences that could effectively replace the jail sentence.

He said the move would also reduce the congestion in prisons and save public funds. --more

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He said the government would like to get the reaction from the public on the proposal, which was discussed by the Cabinet last week.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said some lawyers had agreed that custodial sentence for certain criminal offences be replaced by other forms of sentences.

In this way the government would be able to save public funds -and use the money for social development. --Bernama