

PM gives his full backing to Lord President

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight came out in support of Lord President Tun Abdul Hamid Omar who called on members of the Malaysian Bar who do not recognise his appointment not to appear before him in court.

Dr Mahathir said it was the Lord Presidents prerogative to do so as it would be peculiar for someone who did not recognise his (Tun Hamid's) appointment to appear before him (in court).

"If one does not recognise the Lord President it is not fair for a lawyer to appear before him. It looks peculiar," he said when asked to comment on Hamid's call to lawyers, after breaking of fast at Tabung Haji (The Pilgrims Management and Fund Board) tonight.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali entertained orphans from the Federal Territory Muslim Orphans Welfare Association. Dr Siti Hasmah later presented Hari Raya gifts to the orphans. (See story and picture on Page 4.)

Dr Mahathir also said that the position of the Lord President would not be affected despite the Bar Council's rejection as the council had no right to determine his status.

Earlier, when speaking at the gifts presentation ceremony for the orphans, Dr Mahathir said the people's contributions to the needy would result in a more loving society and caring community.

However, he said the recipients should not always think that they could live from people's aid and contributions all the time.

It would be better for the people to learn to be self-reliant as they would be more respected, he added.