

Resentment triggered Los Angeles race riots: PM

By MANANOSMAN

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THE race riots in Los Angeles which resulted in the death of more than 20 people were triggered off because of resentment of the black population towards the white majority.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who made the comment in Kota Kinabalu at the end of his two-day visit to Sabah yesterday, said the US, which only purportedly practises equality, is not helping the blacks as doing so will mean discriminating against the whites.

As a result, he said, the blacks continue to trail behind and in the process, develop deep resentment against the whites until they cannot contain it any longer.

The riots, described as

the worst in the city in nearly 30 years, were sparked off by the acquittal of four white policemen charged with beating a black motorist.

So far, Dr Mahathir said, no decision has been made on whether to evacuate the 600 Malaysian citizens in the city.

"We are watching the situation and will take the necessary steps when the need arises," he said.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with religious leaders, the Prime Minister said in Malaysia, too, the Government realises the existing differences among the races, but efforts are being made to overcome this.

On Afghanistan, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia will accord recognition to any

group which gets the mandate to rule the country.

On his meeting with leaders of the various religions, Dr Mahathir said he had told them the importance of being tolerant in this multi-religious country so that people of the various religions can live in harmony.

He said he told them that the Government has no intention of forcing anybody to change their religion.

He also briefed them on Hudud laws, which the PAS-led Kelantan Government proposes to implement.

Dr Mahathir said the religious leaders, representing Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Sikhs and Buddhists, accepted his explanation on the Hudud laws.