

# Dr M: Our ties with US unaffected by 'boycott'

By Saiful Azhar  
Abdullah

SINTOK, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysia's relations with the United States are unchanged even though it was reported that some US officials were bypassing Malaysia when visiting the region.

The Prime Minister said he did not know the motives of the officials.

He stressed that the country's relations with the US were not affected but added that he would not know how the US would rate its relations with Malaysia.

The Prime Minister was speaking to newsmen after opening the ex-servicemen's

national seminar on development towards 2020 at Universiti Utara Malaysia here.

He was asked to comment on reports in the Western media that US officials were bypassing Malaysia in their visits to the region following what they claimed to be Dr Mahathir's refusal to answer US President George Bush's telephone call when the latter visited Singapore.

Dr Mahathir said the US President called him one Sunday last January but he did not have the opportunity to speak to Bush because he was not in the office.

Malaysia did not have any problems in its relations with the US but it believes that it also had the right to criticise others in the same

way others criticised Malaysia, he said.

"That does not mean that we are becoming their foes. We will even criticise our friends if they do something which is not right and praise our enemies for doing something good," he added.

Asked whether US officials were bypassing the country because the US was unhappy with the proposed East Asia Economic Caucus, Dr Mahathir said he did not know whether American dislike of the EAEC stemmed from the fact that the proposal came from Malaysia.

Asked on the relations between the Sabah Government and the Federal Government, Dr Mahathir said

the co-operation would follow the outlines stipulated under the law.

He was asked to comment on the statement by Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan that the Parti Bersatu Sabah Government would improve its ties with the Federal Government despite the Barisan Nasional's rejection of its application to be readmitted to the coalition.

Dr Mahathir said Barisan had no confidence in the PBS after it withdrew from the coalition at the time it contested the general election.

FOCUS ON  
EX-SERVICEMEN'S  
SEMINAR: P3