

# PM believes most Rulers will be present Code to be signed

By Manan Osman  
and Shamsul Akmar

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Prime Minister said he believed that the majority, if not all, of the Malay Rulers will be present at the ceremony to sign the Rulers' declaration containing the code of conduct for the royalty tomorrow.

The ceremony is scheduled to be held at Istana Negara here, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

It is expected to be witnessed by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah and Dr Mahathir.

Speaking to reporters after opening the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) and the closed-door congress entitled "Towards the 21st century — Islam and Vision 2020" at Putra World Trade Centre, Dr Mahathir said that all the Menteris Besar and some Ministers would be present at the ceremony.

The declaration was drafted by Umno, the dominant party in the Government, following consultations with the Council of Rulers after many people complained that the actions of certain Rulers had "aggrieved" them.

The matter was raised by Umno members during the party's general assembly last November.

A seven-member special committee, which included the party's vice-presidents, secretary-general and treasurer, was then set up to prepare a comprehensive paper on the code of conduct.

The draft of the code was finally agreed upon by the Rulers after six meetings between them and the Umno delegation, which led to several amendments being made to the original text.

The code will specify the relationship between the Rulers and the Federal and State leaderships and define "constitutional monarchy".

It will also lay down the regulations for the appointment of Menteris Besar, State Executive Councilors and State Government officials, apart from addressing other issues such as the involvement of Rulers in business and palace expenditure.

The draft of the code, which was approved by the Umno supreme council on April 17, is intended to strengthen the relationship between the Rulers and the people.

It is also meant to smoothen communication between the Rulers and the Government and to prevent any misunderstanding or wrongdoing.

In Kota Baru, it was learnt that the Sultan of Kelantan would neither attend the ceremony nor sign the declaration tomorrow.

"The Sultan decided to reject the code sometime back and has made his decision known to the public a couple of times," said a source.

The Sultan had said that the Malay Rulers, as heads of Islam in their respective States, could not be bound by any code of ethics other than those stated in the Quran and the Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet).

The Ruler also said the divine code was the only one which bound every Muslim in the country, from the Rulers, heads of States, the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and officers to the ordinary people.

It was learnt that the Sultan's decision not to attend the signing tomorrow has been conveyed to the Keeper of the Rulers' seal.

at ceremony  
today