
Groups taken to task over language issue

By ZULKIFLI TALIB

KUALA LUMPUR: The Umno supreme council has hit out at certain groups which are trying to imply that the Government was giving more emphasis to the English language than Bahasa Malaysia.

Describing these people as having a "closed attitude," the council said the Government had merely stressed the impor-

tance of the English language to help the nation progress in the global economy.

Speaking to reporters after chairing a council meeting, party president **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said the Government would continue to uphold the present National Language Policy.

He said Bahasa Malaysia was the official language while English, as the second language,

would be used as the language of commerce and knowledge.

"I do not know what their motives are but the fact remains that they have made this into an issue when the people have not even questioned the Government's position on Bahasa Malaysia and English," he said.

Dr Mahathir was criticised by several academicians and a Bahasa Malaysia daily recently

for stressing the importance of the English language.

Asked whether this meant he wanted the issue closed, the Prime Minister said there was Press freedom in the country and any government order would be viewed as an act of oppression against the Press.

"However, we believe journalists and editors are responsible people," he said.
