

# PM's pledge

'We'll protect the people's interests'

By ROHAIZAD A. RAHIM

KUALA LUMPUR: There is no provision in the law that allows one party to harm another, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister pledged to protect the interests of the people, saying the enforcement of the law would be reviewed to ensure that they were not victimised.

Dr Mahathir said members of the royalty were not above the law.

"The freedom given to the few is limited to certain matters but the freedom does not include causing bodily harm or killing people," he told reporters after opening the MIC 39th general assembly.

"We also like to advise them that if such matter happens again, the Government will not just let it go."

Dr Mahathir was asked to elaborate on the Cabinet's stand on the controversy resulting from the pullout of Maktab Sultan Abu Bakar hockey team from the School Champions Tournament recently.

The coach of the Johor college, Douglas Gomez, was summoned to the palace after he criticised the pullout decision. It was reported that he went on medical leave after seeking treatment for injuries.

To a question, Dr Mahathir expressed his disappointment over the matter and said that the method of law enforcement would be reviewed.

"I am disappointed. A party who has no involvement in the Government should not be giving orders to government officials, especially an order which should not have been made for things that were done . . . it should not have been done by anybody," he said.

"Nowadays, such things should not have happened. In ancient times, yes, but not now."

Dr Mahathir said the Government would not condone such action and would take appropriate action to protect the interests of the people.

He advised those who were involved in such incidents to lodge police reports so that action could be taken. He assured the victims that they would be protected.

Dr Mahathir said although the Government could not take action against those responsible in this case, those who abetted in "kidnapping and taking the person to a place where he was beaten up" would face the wrath of the law.

"Those who abetted have committed a crime and they will not be spared from the law."

To another question, Dr Mahathir said the people

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## PM: Don't be afraid to exercise your rights

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To another question, Dr Mahathir said the people have a right to reject a royal summons.

"It is the people's prerogative. If they want to go they can and if they do not want, there is nothing wrong," he said.

"The people must not be afraid as their interests are protected by the law and they themselves must uphold the law."

In IPOH, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said yesterday the Cabinet decision was a collective one.

"We hope that everybody will abide by this ruling," he said in reply to questions by newsmen on the MCA's stand.