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Mahathir-Rulers

MAHATHIR EXPRESSES CONCERN THAT INCIDENTS MAY AFFECT IMAGE OF RULERS

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed concern that any more incidents involving members of Royalty might affect the image of the Malay Rulers in the eyes of the people.

The people's view of the institution of Rulers might be affected if such a situation prevailed, the Prime Minister said.

Alluding to the people's criticism of the monarchy in Britain, he said: +I fear that if such incidents happen again it would affect the image of Rulers and the people's views, on the institution of Ruler:;.+

Dr Mahathir, who earlier addressed the 14th meeting of the Federation of International Non-Governmental Organisations on Dadah here, was speaking to reporters about two recent incidents.

In one, the Tengku Bendahara of Johor Tengku Majid Idris was found guilty by the Malaysian Hockey Federation of assaulting a Perak hockey goalkeeper last July.

Last Monday, Maktab Sultan Abu Bakar (MSAB) hockey coach Douglas Gomez sought treatment at a clinic after being summoned to Istana Bukit Serene in Johor Baharu. -- more

▼07/12/13-51MST

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The incident came in the wake of Gomez's criticism of the Johor Hockey Association principle office-bearers after the forced pull-out of the MSAB team from the MHF-Milo Schools Champion tournament earlier.

Dr Mahathir said the British people now had a different perception of their Royalty following incidents involving members of the Royalty.

He was asked if the government or Umno would seek an audience with the Rulers to discuss the matter and he replied: +I do not know yet.. we have not thought of this.+

He said the government would have to study the form of action that could be taken in the matter.

Dr Mahathir also said that in the appointment of a successor to the throne it was necessary to consider whether a prince was suitable for the position.

+If he likes to beat people and so on, we should consider if he is fit to be a Ruler,+ he, added.

He noted that during the British colonial rule in Malaya, a Crown Prince was demoted, thus being denied the right to succeed to the throne because of his negative attitude. -- more

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He said the conduct of a successor to the throne must be one befitting his position as Crown prince and future ruler.

The appointment of Rulers must follow the system practised in each state, he added.

The Prime Minister said it was up to the police to investigate the matter as +they know their work and I need not advise them.+

He also said that the immunity enjoyed by the Rulers was not unlimited to the extent that they could kill or beat people.

+Above the law means that we cannot take action against them in certain matters only,+ he added.

Asked about the advice given by Sultan Azlan Shah when he was the Lord President in 1981 that the institution of Rulers should protect their credibility if they did not wish to be consigned to the museum, Dr Mahathir said the Rulers should take heed. -- Bernama

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