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# When action can be taken against prince

KUALA LUMPUR: Tengku Majid, the Tengku Bendahara of Johor, will be prosecuted in a court of law if there is sufficient evidence, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the children of the Sultans were not above the law and they would be prosecuted if there was proof of criminal misdeeds.

Tengku Majid was given a five-year ban by the Malaysian Hockey Federation after he was found guilty of assaulting a Perak goalkeeper at a Sukan Malaysia match earlier this year.

His ban subsequently led to the alleged assault of hockey coach Douglas Gomez by the Sultan of Johor.

Asked about the sultans' special powers to pardon criminals, Dr Mahathir said the authorities concerned would look into that provision to determine if the offence committed could be pardoned.

He said the actions to be taken by the Government might lead to a deterioration of the relationship between the palace and the Government, but there were already some rulers who realised that any member of the royalty who committed a crime

should not be protected.

Dr Mahathir said the success of the action sought depended on the people in the country.

"This is the first time that even the opposition parties support our plans," he said.

He said that in terms of popular support, what the Government planned to do would succeed.

"Gomez will be protected if we feel he is in any danger, but we have already planned to take action against those who have abetted in this crime.

"I have given a guarantee that the Government will give protection to all who had been victimised," he said.

He said the protection issue was debated in Parliament and the Government and opposition were willing to face the consequences that might arise from the freedom of speech given to all parties.

"There may be some who may challenge why we had debated this matter, but we are willing to stand side-by-side with the opposition in this issue," he added.

Dr Mahathir said he hoped that no one would politicise the issue into a political party matter.