

PM: Good sign

Dr M welcomes Pahang Sultan's statement

By WONG CHUN WAI

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has welcomed the possibility of a settlement on the Constitution amendment issue at the next Conference of Rulers meeting.

The Prime Minister said yesterday he welcomed the Pahang Sultan's statement that the issue could be resolved.

"I cannot guess (what it is all about). We have to wait for the meeting," he told reporters after chairing a three-hour Umno supreme council meeting.

In his impromptu speech after performing Friday prayers at a mosque in Raub, the Sultan of Pahang expressed confidence that the issue could be resolved at the meeting to be held on Wednesday and Thursday.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said he would not be able to attend the meeting because he would have to be with Mauritian Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth, who would be here on a four-day visit.

However, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Baba will attend the meeting at Istana Negara.

The Prime Minister said the party was satisfied with the achievements of the Bill.

He refuted suggestions that the issue had further split the Malay community.

"We don't think so. The Malays have been divided because they are from different political parties," he said.

"If at all there is any confrontation between the different Malay groups, it is the same old confrontation between the government party and the opposition party."

Asked to comment on reports that the Tengku Mahkota of Johor was campaigning at Felda schemes, Dr Mahathir said although members of royal households had the right to be involved in politics, such involvement would affect their personal image.

He also warned that if such campaigns continued, the party could do likewise.

To a question, he said the Yang di-Pertuan Agong would continue to be informed of Cabinet discussions despite the Government's decision to stop pre-Cabinet briefings.

"The King gets a copy of all matters discussed," he said.

"If he really requires to discuss something, he can ask me to see him, and I will see him."

Dr Mahathir said the pre-Cabinet briefing for the King was not a rule but first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman had started it, which then became a tradition.