

Mahathir:

JMF

will be disbanded eventually

PENANG: The Johor Military Force will be disbanded eventually although no date has been fixed for the exercise, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Government would table the Johor Military Force (Disbandment and Repeal) Bill 1994 again at a later date, the Prime Minister told a press conference after chairing a Cabinet meeting here yesterday.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had said on Tuesday that the JMF would be retained for the time being.

He said the Government made the decision as some people had cited sentimental and historical reasons for retaining the force, the only one of its kind in Malaysia.

The bill, which was tabled on July 5 for first reading in the Dewan Rakyat by Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Wan Abu Bakar Wan Mohamed, was withdrawn two days later.

Najib said yesterday the Government would not allow the force to recruit new personnel.

He said the force would be used strictly for ceremonial functions, adding that stern action would be taken against those found abusing their powers.

In JOHOR BARU, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the state would abide by the Federal Government's decision.

The state would, however, seek further clarification on the matter, he told reporters after chairing the state exco meeting.

"We made the decision to disband the JMF last July. However, the procedure is up to the Federal Government," he said.

To a question, Muhyiddin said JMF personnel were still under the payroll of the state government.