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Low attendance not a good indicator: PM

THE low attendance of members of Parliament (MPs) during certain parliamentary sittings should not be used as an indicator to judge them, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said at times the MPs would be outside the hall but would be listening to the proceedings through the public address system.

"If you look at the number of people in the hall yes. But they (MPs) are outside. We provide the broadcast and you can listen while in the coffee house, lounge and other places," he said when asked on the survey by the New Straits Times over the daily attendance of the MPs during Parliament sessions.

The newspaper printed an index showing the number of MPs who have been attending the parliament daily since Parliament began its current session on March 24.

The index showed that number of MPs in the hall decreases after the daily session starts at 2.30pm.

Speaking to reporters at the Universiti Putra Malaysia during a day-long visit, Dr Mahathir said it does not mean that when an MP is not inside the hall, they are not participating in it.

"You can see ... if there is anything important, they will run (into the hall)," he added.

Dr Mahathir said while he was glad of the newspaper's efforts, it should, however, not be an absolute measure of the diligence of the MPs.

On the proposed increase in allowances for MPs, Dr Mahathir said: "I am not asking for more salary, I am very happy with my salary."

He said some people may think that unless they earn more salary than their subordinates, they are not really superior to the latter.

"I don't think salary has got anything to do," he said to one's performance.

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