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NO DOCTOR WOULD REJECT PATIENTS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he does not think a doctor would reject patients who seek treatment at hospitals.

Although patients were sometimes denied treatment, this was unlikely to be done on purpose, he said.

"I do not think such a thing would be intentionally done by doctors, but if there were no qualified doctors and they could not give treatment, they would ask for the patient to be sent to a specialist hospital," he told reporters after launching the Wanita Umno election work camp here.

He was asked to comment on a report by The Star about the death of student Liang Thian How, 18, who was allegedly denied treatment by the Seberang Jaya Hospital because it did not have specialists.

Liang, a prefect of SMJK Jit Sin, Bukit Mertajam, was a victim of a hit-and-run accident. He was admitted to a private hospital on the island four days later but died.

Dr Mahathir said most government hospitals were short of staff, especially doctors, because many moved to private hospitals.

"We are not producing enough doctors, especially Malay doctors, because a lot of Malay students prefer to study easy subjects.

"They don't want to study medicine because it takes a long time, and the work condition is very difficult," he added.

-- BERNAMA

NZ YBY