

# Mahathir tells police to be professional

Security forces cannot take sides as this will lead to factions

SUN 20.12.2000

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Tues:** The police force must be professional and impartial in discharging their duties to ensure that law and order in the country is maintained at all times.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the security forces, including the police and the armed forces, must carry out their duties efficiently and effectively under the present-day government.

"Once they start to take sides it will result in the personnel not being able to carry out their duties fairly and free from any influence," said Mahathir.

Such conduct, he said, will divide the security forces into factions and this will eventually bring chaos and trouble.

He said this in his speech before a closed dialogue session with the police at the senior officers' mess in Bukit Aman here today.

Both Barisan Nasional and opposition leaders have questioned the professionalism of the police in recent political events.

Mahathir later joined the police personnel in breaking fast at the mosque in the federal police headquarters grounds here.

Mahathir said the police should also be not afraid of taking stern action when the condition warrants as they have to ensure that peace and order are maintained at all times.

He said the police should also not be unduly worried about the setting up of the Human Rights Commission as the government cannot be influenced by allegations made by the various sectors.

Mahathir said the commission was formed as the

government wants to be transparent and also safeguard the basic human rights due to the allegations from within and outside that the government oppresses the people.

The police he said at times may not like Suhakam's actions but this is necessary because the people are more aware of their rights.

The police, he said, must also investigate cases where people claim they are victims of police brutality as this will assure the people that they carry out their duties according to the law.

The foreign media, he said, is also trying to project a negative image of the country by portraying the police as being brutal.

He said this is also rampant overseas where the media focuses on every move made by the police.

"For example during demonstrations, they take pictures of the police taking

action against demonstrators to prove that the police are brutal, he said.

"However they fail to see the brutality of the demonstrators against the police" he added.

The demonstrators who in some cases number up to 40,000 presume that the police won't take action against them because of various reasons including that they are large in numbers and the police would not have enough proof to prosecute them.

"There are no two ways about it; the security forces must adhere to the instructions from the government to carry out their duties professionally," said Mahathir.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is also the Home Minister, the deputy home ministers, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai, state CPOs, directors and senior officers and men.