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PM keeping tabs on MPs

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The performance of Members of Parliament is being monitored personally by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who watches the Dewan Rakyat proceedings from his office in Putrajaya.

He said he could see exactly what went on in the House as it was "wired" to his office located 40km away.

"I can look into the chambers, and see who's talking and who's not.

"I know when the room is empty," he told reporters today after launching Rida-Mara's golden anniversary celebrations.

He said he was very disappointed with the Barisan Nasional MPs' attendance in the House.

"I have warned them, I am now taking note (of their performance)," he said.

When contacted, Parliament public relations officer Ahmad Asri Zakaria said the proceedings were being broadcast via close-circuit television.

At present, it is transmitted to the Prime Minister's office in Putrajaya and the offices of the Dewan Rakyat Speaker and Dewan Negara President.

In future, it will also be broadcast to the lounge and media centre.

Ahmad Asri said Dewan Negara proceedings had been transmitted since last year while the broadcast for the Dewan Rakyat began early this year, in the last Parliamentary session.

The poor attendance of BN MPs has also caught the attention of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is the BN whip.

He had issued a circular, dated Oct 30, warning them to stop playing truant and to be responsible about their duties.

He noted that some of them were not even in the House to ask questions which they had earlier submitted in writing.

The Cabinet, at its weekly meeting on Oct 25, had discussed the matter.

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