

PM: Anwar may not return from treatment

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Government cannot allow Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to go overseas for medical treatment because he may not come back to serve his jail sentence, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir said the Government knew that was one of the reasons why Anwar wanted to seek treatment in Germany instead of having

it in Malaysia.

"We know why he wants to go overseas for treatment. We know that if we allow him to go, he will never come back," he said in his speech at a meet-the-people session in Gombak near here yesterday.

Thousands of people of various races attended the session, organised by the Viewers, Listeners and Readers Club.

Dr Mahathir also said the Government had been "very lenient" with Anwar and had

accorded him various privileges not given to other prisoners, including allowing him to stay in hospital for four months instead of in his prison cell.

"Never in the history of this country has a prisoner been treated this well. Despite that, the opposition parties, especially Parti Keadilan Nasional, still say that the Government is cruel," he said.

On PAS, Dr Mahathir said the party should be thankful to the National Fatwa Council for

its recommendation to the Conference of Rulers which decided that the word "Islam" could continue to be used by the party provided that it adhere to certain guidelines.

Instead, he said, PAS had alleged that the council's president, Datuk Dr Ismail Ibrahim, had tried to influence the Rulers.

"Even with the new guidelines endorsed by the Council of Rulers, PAS still does not want to retract the *Amanat Haji Hadi*, which has been the

main cause of Malay disunity in this country.

"Its leaders now claim that the party has never said Umno is an infidel party. That is a lie because everyone knows about the statement and it has never been officially retracted by the party," he added.

Dr Mahathir also urged all Malays, irrespective of their political belief, to be united and at the same time, not harbour any animosity towards other races.