

SUN - 2 JUL 2007

Govt will defend Sabah: Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun: The government will defend Sabah in whatever way to prevent it from being taken away.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was speaking to students from local universities during a dialogue session at Universiti Malaya today, said this in response to a question from a Sabahan student.

The student had asked whether the government will defend Sabah over which the Philippines government is making claims.

Mahathir said the government will defend Sabah in "whatever way and it will be part of Malaysia".

He said it is better for the Philippines government not to make any demands as the matter has been referred to the world court.

Another student asked Mahathir for clarification on hudud law which PAS is trying to implement.

He said the issue of hudud law started by PAS has split the Malays, and it has called the present government secular for not implementing hudud law.

A study on the implementation of hudud law found that no Islamic country in the world has implemented the law fully, he said.

"Even if there are countries implementing the law, it is only a certain portion because it will be difficult to implement among the Muslims based on the present situation."

Another student requested the quota system in local universities for bumiputras be maintained as the Malays "can't compete" with other races at the moment.

He said the government will defend the quota system but expressed his hope that students will study harder, and that "we need to increase the cut-off point in passing in order to be on par with other races".