

Dr M doesn't expect MCA splinter group

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad does not believe the MCA crisis will lead to the formation of a splinter group.

He said the problem is not as serious as that faced by Umno in 1987, which resulted in the formation of Semangat 46 and Umno Baru, when the party was declared illegal.

"I think it is not that serious. There will not be a splinter group forming

another party.

"They are all loyal to Barisan Nasional ... I have spoken to them. They just have some personal problems," he said after opening the Permodalan Nasional Bhd gallery.

Mahathir also said the MCA crisis will not jeopardise the BN's performance in the impending by-election for Indera Kayangan.

"It is just a localised problem and they can solve it," he said in res-

ponse to a question.

Asked if Parti Keadilan Nasional will use the issue to fish for votes, Mahathir said: "They don't have any other issues, so they will use this issue. Apart from talking about the predicament of others, what else can they offer?"

"If we want to contest, we must come up with ways to improve the situation and not just use the problems of others to fish for votes."