

'MAF must tell why they want to see me'

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KOTA KINABALU, Sun. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he would like to know why representatives of the Malay Action Front wanted to meet him before he could decide whether to meet them.

"If they want to see me I want to know why," he told a Press conference after a meeting with Umno branch leaders from Gaya and Tanjung Aru divisions, here, today.

Dr Mahathir was asked about a report that the co-ordinator of the recently-held MAF rally, Datuk Ibrahim Ali, had sought a meeting

with the Prime Minister to explain the MAF's side of the story about the rally.

The MAF rally had come under criticism from several Umno leaders for deviating from its original objective of promoting Malay unity.

It was alleged that certain leaders who were invited to speak at the rally had touched on racial issues and also used the rally as an avenue to criticise Umno leaders.

In an apparent reference to remarks against the Chinese made at the rally, Dr Mahathir said he wanted to know the reasons why

the MAF wanted to see him "because I don't want to make it look as if we are going to fight the Chinese".

The Prime Minister added Umno had nothing to do with the MAF, although a permit was issued to it to organise the rally.

"It was the MAF's decision to hold the rally... we have nothing to do with it," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he agreed that the police should give MAF the permission to hold the rally provided that it was held at an enclosed place.