

PM: Some planned to disrupt rally

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that certain quarters had planned to disrupt a rally by the Malay Action Front if it was held at the Sultan Sulaiman Club in Kampung Baru.

The *Takkan Melayu Hilang Di Dunia* rally is now scheduled to be held at Merdeka Hall of the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur today.

"I heard that some others were planning to organise a demonstration to disrupt this rally. We heard they wanted to go to Kampung Baru to create trouble, unfurl banners and other things.

"Some people ... they like to organise demonstrations. But if others want to hold demonstrations on matters that they are not agreeable to, they want to disturb.

"That's why the police did not issue a permit to allow the (MAF) rally

to be held at the Sultan Sulaiman Club," Dr Mahathir said after attending the wedding reception of V. Valluvan Veloo, an assistant director in Mampu, and Thilagarani Selvaraj at the Precint 8 multi-purpose hall here yesterday.

He said he had no objection to the rally being held but reiterated that it had nothing to do with Umno.

"Umno members are not allowed to take part in the rally. But some members are doing so. We cannot do anything about it," he added.

When asked if it was all right for such rallies to be held by non-political bodies like the MAF, Dr Mahathir replied: "It's okay. After all, other people can hold demonstrations by the roadside."

In Lumut, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said they would not be unfair towards anyone as far as holding large-scale gatherings are concerned.

He said the Government would not issue permits for large-scale gatherings in open spaces, which was why the MAF gathering earlier planned at the Sultan Sulaiman Club was disallowed.

However, he said when the venue was changed to the Putra World Trade Centre, the permit was issued.

"Gatherings which will discuss topics which are racial in nature cannot be allowed to be held in open space.

"The Government is not biased but fair and just. Everyone will be treated the same way and we have the same regulations for everyone.

"The PWTC venue is more appropriate," he said after opening the National Registration Department's family day at Damai Laut Golf & Country Resort here yesterday.