

PM: Speak up against demos

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'Don't let demonstrators think they have support'

PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that Malaysians who oppose street demonstrations should state their stand if they want to see peace preserved in the country.

The Prime Minister said that, by keeping silent, they only gave the perpetrators the impression that they had the blessings and support of those who were actually against street demonstrations.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at a meeting with a 21-member delegation from silat and martial arts associations at Seri Perdana, the prime minister's official residence here yesterday.

He said that disenchanted citizens could change the Government through general elections, citing the example of opposition parties ruling Penang and Sabah in the past and Kelantan and Terengganu cur-

rently.

He advised students not to allow themselves to be tools of organisers of street demonstrations.

Getting involved in street demonstrations only showed that students were unappreciative of opportunities and funding provided by the Government for them to get educated, said Dr Mahathir who likened the situation to throwing money down the drain.

Earlier, the delegation, claiming to represent 5.3 million martial arts exponents of various races nationwide, handed over to the prime minister a memorandum calling for a stop to street demonstrations by any political party.

The delegation declared loyalty to the elected government in the interest of peace and stability.

Datuk Omardin Mauju, head of Seni Silat Lincah Malaysia,

said they were initially not inclined to give their views as the demonstrations were politically motivated.

"Now, it has reached a state where peace is being threatened, so we decided to do something about it," he said.

Others interviewed, including Taekwondo Global Malaysia president Datuk Dr Sabree Salleh and head of Kalari Payat Malaysia Hamzah Abu, agreed with Omardin.