

# Dr M's reponse to request by MAF to meet him

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KOTA KINABALU: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he wants to know why the Malay Action Front (MAF) wants to meet him.

"If they want to see me, I want to know what they want to see me about. I don't want to make it (such a meeting) look like we are going to fight the Chinese or something like that," the Prime Minister said yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked if he would meet the MAF, whose co-ordinating chairman Ibrahim Ali said on Saturday that they wanted to meet him to explain their side of the story.

Several Umno leaders had asked MAF to apologise for the disparaging remarks and criticisms against the party leadership under Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir said the MAF made its decision to hold a gathering and "we have nothing to do with them."

Dr Mahathir, who is in Sabah for a two-day visit, had a closed-door meeting with two Umno divisions — Gaya and

Tanjung Aru — and later met the Sabah Umno liaison committee.

On his meeting with 600 grassroots leaders of the two divisions, he said that he took the opportunity to explain Umno's struggles and principles.

"I stressed on the importance of co-operating with all other parties to succeed," he said.

On whether they discussed the coming division elections, he said there were no direct discussions.

"I only advised them that in the event of a contest, those who lose must support the victors," he said.

On problems brought up by the divisions, Dr Mahathir said they were mainly local issues related to squatters, electricity and water supply.

He said he had asked Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam to find solutions to the problems.

Today, Dr Mahathir will meet two more Umno divisions — Sipitang and Beaufort — after opening the 36th Conference of South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation.