

Dr M: Fadzil refused to discuss Malay rights

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Mahathir thinks PAS does not want to meet up with Umno for talks

By R. Manirajan
manirajan@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues: PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor refused to discuss the four constitutional provisions concerning the Malays when he met Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Parliament yesterday.

"I met him in Parliament yesterday shook hands with him during tea after the King opened the 10th Parliament sitting," Mahathir disclosed today.

"I asked him if we could discuss the four provisions ... he said no if he had said yes, everything would have been settled yesterday ... I would have only taken five minutes."

Mahathir was speaking to reporters after opening a seminar on *Integrity in Business: The Way Forward* at a hotel here.

He said there were only four things he wanted to discuss with Fadzil that are in the constitution.

He said the four things which the party wants to discuss are the responsibility of all Malays.

"It's not the responsibility of PAS, Umno or Keadilan, but these are things in the federal constitution which ensure the position of the Malays," he said.

"We need to protect if anyone tries to challenge these provisions, and we only want to talk about this all it takes is five minutes and these can be settled ... no problem. I wanted to discuss yesterday but Fadzil did not want to."

Asked about PAS's demand for three pre-conditions be fulfilled by Umno before the talks can take place, Mahathir said: "I hate to say this because this will be another excuse for PAS not wanting to meet us but I think they don't want to meet us."

He said PAS is under the impression that they have all the Malay votes and all they need to do now is to get the Chinese votes.

"To get the Chinese votes, PAS wants to make out that Umno is anti-Chinese and that is why PAS wants to talk about national unity and Umno wants to talk about Malay unity," he said.

"PAS wants to talk about national unity because it wants to show that it cares about the other races in the country

"PAS said on the Internet

and in *Harakah* that if Umno Malays want to kill the Chinese it (PAS) will defend the Chinese ... when did Umno talk about killing the Chinese?" he said.

He said Umno is open to the unity talks and there is no time limit involved as it is very important.

However, Mahathir feels there is a need to put aside one's party and think about togetherness, especially concerning Malay rights.

Asked about the rotation system for the Sabah chief ministership, which the Opposition says is a slap on the face for non-Muslim bumiputras in the state, Mahathir said: "If the rotation system is abolished, the Opposition will say that we never kept to our promises ... if we continue with it, they will say it's a bad system."