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Rousing welcome for PM at Universiti Malaya

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Rumours of a massive boycott and demonstrations to mark Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visit to Universiti Malaya fell flat today when the Prime Minister received overwhelming support from about 3,000 students and well-wishers.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, arrived at 10am and was immediately greeted with shouts of "Hidup Melayu" and "Hidup Mahathir".

However, taking no chances on the Prime Minister's safety, organisers took measures to ensure security was tight.

Umno members, in particular Puteri Umno, led by its head Azalina Othman Said, were present to lend support to the Prime Minister.

In the past few days, leaflets had been circulating in the campus urging Universiti Malaya residents to boycott the symposium as a sign of protest against Dr Mahathir's leadership.

There were also rumours that a big demonstration was to be staged on campus ground today.

During a dialogue later with Dr Mahathir, several students representatives pledged their support for his leadership and also to UM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Anuar Zaini Mohd Zain.

They also urged Dr Mahathir to put an end to several "baseless" allegations against Anuar.

Anuar had come under fire from several quarters, including Puteri Umno, who claimed the blaze which razed the 35-year-old Dewan Tunku Canselor could have been averted if he had been more responsible in monitoring the students' activities.

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