

PM: It's useless to sue

SUNDAY 4 MAY 2002

'Makers of wild claims out for cheap publicity'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it is futile for a person like Puteri Umno pro tem head Azalina Othman said to sue someone who had alleged all kinds of things about her private life.

"If you sue the person, he or she will come out with all kinds of accusations (in court) and it will come out in the press. At the end of the day, the person allegedly libelled is found innocent but by that time, that person is already finished," he said after attending the Workers' Day gathering for the public sector at Intan yesterday.

The Umno president was asked to comment on reports by tabloid *Perdana Sari* on Azalina's personal conduct.

"It is not always easy to sue ... lots of things have been said about me. I know what they'll do they want the publicity and run down and pick up all kinds of things relevant or not," he said.

He said it is just a trick which could be used by an

efficient lawyer in court and exploited for political gain.

Xzalina, speaking at the function in Terengganu, said she had been challenged by certain groups to sue the tabloid, which among other things, claimed that she used Puteri Umno funds to buy a RM300,000 car for a friend.

"For me, suing people who are not that OK is a waste of money," she said.

Mahathir said the purpose of the allegation is political. "(Azalina's enemies) see that she is coming up, she is immediately accused.

"This is a way of throwing mud at people and thinking (that) you are safe because you can hide behind the courts," he said.

He said publishers of such newspapers are bankrupts and have no other work but to seek cheap publicity.

"I, too, don't want to take legal action. There are various allegations saying my son has 90 companies, receives RM900,000 in salary every month. He does not get a single sen but he doesn't want to sue. He cannot be bothered with these people," said Mahathir.