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Dr M in a dilemma over changes to privileges

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has his own dilemma: whether to make changes to Malay privileges before he retires in October next year.

"Well, that is my dilemma. Sixteen months is not a long time. If we do things without thinking of the consequences, it will be retrogressive."

He said this in reply to a question on whether he would make dramatic changes before he retires. Dr Mahathir was fielding questions at the Harvard Club of Malaysia dinner after delivering a speech on "The New Malay Dilemma".

"My idea is to make Malays conscious of this (dependency on affirmative action policies). I say these things very frequently and a lot of people are annoyed with me," the Prime Minister said.

"If I go too far, I will be rejected and succeed in doing nothing."

He said the Malays should discuss this issue among themselves as it was sensitive in a multi-racial society.

"There are many Malays who are conscious of this, let them do a correction."