

'Non-Malay party will run Penang'

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THE Penang Chief Minister's post will remain with a non-Malay based component party in the Barisan Nasional.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was not the question of the race of the person running the state but how he ran it.

"We give the Malays (to manage) Kelantan, but (their interests) are not taken care of.

"So it is not question of who that person is but rather how the state is administered.

"I think we can think of other ways to take care of the interest of the Malays in Penang," he told a press conference at the end of the second day of the Umno general assembly yesterday.

The Umno president was asked to comment on a call by the Penang Umno Youth that the best way to protect the interest of the Malays in the state effectively was by appointing a Chief Minister from Umno.

Dr Mahathir also said that the party would look at ways to strengthen its code of ethics to curtail possible disunity during party elections.

Asked if 'the party constitution would be amended for this purpose and on the possibility of the top posts being limited to a few terms, he said Umno's ethics was sufficient to determine whether the president could stay on.

"If it is too short a term, even I would not have a chance. Then there



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would be many things that I would not be able to do. Just imagine how much I cannot do if the term is shortened," he added.

Dr Mahathir has been Umno president since 1981.

Asked whether his criticism of Europeans would hurt the country's economy, Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, said he did not think so.

"Even if it does, it will only be for a short while. Many people have said this. But I believe in calling a spade a spade.

"I don't think Europeans should feel hurt just because I use the right term," he added.