

Dr M allowed in as he didn't talk on politics, says navy
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PERAK Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad was allowed into the Lumut naval base in Perak last week as he only spoke about solidarity and not on politics, the Royal Malaysian Navy says.

According to Bernama, navy chief Abdul Aziz Jaafar said this when justifying why Mahathir was permitted into the naval base to speak to some 2,000 personnel there, while First Admiral (Rtd) Mohamad Imran Abdul, who had spent 37 years serving at the base, was not allowed in the next day.

Mohamad Imran is the PKR candidate for the Lumut parliamentary seat.

"Former prime minister Mahathir was allowed in because he did not talk about politics. He came here to talk about solidarity while Ahmad Zahid Hamidi came here in his capacity as the (caretaker) defence minister," the national news agency quoted Abdul Aziz as saying.

"But for Imran, I'm sure he will talk on politics, interspersed with slander, and will anger the personnel here... we don't want any agenda to be brought in that will divide the people," he said.

Mahathir visited the base on April 23 together with BN's Lumut candidate Kong Cho Ha, who is also caretaker transport minister.

There, he advised the navy personnel not to vote emotionally as having the wrong people rule the country would result in a failed Islamic state.

He said the BN government must be given credit for providing peace, justice and development in the country and further warned that Muslim Malays would become the minority if the country were split as a result of political differences.

Yet Mohamad Imran (right, in white songkok), who had been scheduled to perform his prayers at a mosque in the Lumut base the next day, said he was barred from entering the base and told he could not enter wearing a PKR shirt.

Meanwhile, Bernama also reported the navy chief as warning the opposition candidates to cease politicising the Scorpene submarines issue during campaigning.

Abdul Aziz said he had received information that several candidates were disputing the purchase of the submarines and were claiming they were not functioning.

He reportedly said he was gathering evidence as the navy would not hesitate to sue those responsible for defamation, should the matter persist.

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