

Dr M: Why should a PM be demonstrating?

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should take action against Myanmar over the Rohingya crisis instead of attending a demonstration, said former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said protests are meant to oppose governments, whereas the government's role is not to protest but to take action.

"If we become the government, my proposal would be to break off diplomatic relations to show our displeasure towards how the Rohingyas are treated.

"When he (Najib) is prime minister, he goes to a demonstration. Who is he demonstrating to?" he told a press conference in Shah Alam today.

Mahathir said that when he was prime minister, and when pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi was under house arrest, he had written letters and sent envoys to the then leaders of the Myanmar junta.

"That is what governments do, because at that level you don't have to take to the streets.

"I join street demonstration (now) because I am not in the government anymore," he said.

Mahathir was responding to a question that was posed to him and Pakatan Harapan component party leaders, on whether they had been invited to the [solidary rally](#) for Rohingyas that took place this morning.

PAS invited, but not Pakatan

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, Amanah president Mohamad Sabu and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail each replied in the negative.

The party leaders were attending the 50th DAP National Convention in Shah Alam instead, while Najib, PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang, and some 10,000 others attended the solidarity rally.

The Rohingyas originate from the Rakhine state of Myanmar, which borders Bangladesh. They had long faced persecution as the predominantly Muslim minority is not recognised as citizens in Myanmar.

There had been increasing reports of violence against the Rohingyas in recent weeks, prompting the latest series of anti-Myanmar protests.

Meanwhile, in his policy speech earlier today, Lim said Najib's attendance at the Rohingya

solidarity rally is merely *wayang* (a show).

He said the opposition had previously tabled a motion in the Dewan Rakyat to debate the Rohingya issue, but the motion was rejected.

"But now they want to hold a rally to condemn the oppression against the Rohingyas. This, we feel is a sham on their part," he said.

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