

Dr M: Focus on AP issue

Leave less serious matters to aides, Rafidah advised

The Star - 30/9/2005

KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz to tackle the approved permit (AP) issue in Parliament and leave less important ministerial matters to subordinates.

"We know she is very busy with her work, but some of the less serious issues can be taken on by her deputies while she attends Parliament," said the former prime minister.

"It is a serious matter and from the

looks of it, all Members of Parliament deem it to be so, too," he told newsmen after giving a speech at Victoria Institution yesterday.

Dr Mahathir, who was commenting on the Cabinet's directive to Rafidah to appear in Parliament to reply to questions on the AP controversy, said it was important for the International Trade and Industry Minister to address the issue herself and not leave it to her parliamentary secretary.

Dr Mahathir also said that when he was prime minister, he had asked Rafidah's ministry to check why the duties on imported cars were under-declared, "but I was told they were not responsible for it."

"I trusted my ministers to handle the APs. There was no necessity for me to be informed of everything," he said.

On another issue, Dr Mahathir said he was saddened over the high number of fatalities on the roads in the country.

"The most dangerous place in the country is our roads. When are we going to learn road manners and how to drive properly?" he wondered.

Dr Mahathir said learner drivers should be made to undergo comprehensive training before they could be allowed on the road.

He said that during his travels around the world as prime minister, he had never seen such a high number of road accidents in other countries.