

Group defends Mahathir's right to air views

PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has every right to air his views and nobody should try to prevent him from saying what he feels about the Government or the country.

That is the stand of the Young Professional Chamber of Malaysia (Promuda) following the former prime minister's statement on the current leadership yesterday.

Chairman Don Rahim said Dr Mahathir not only had the right to make comments about the present leadership and other issues affecting the nation and hoped he would continue doing so.

"We in Promuda feel that most of the issues raised by Dr Mahathir were valid. What we hope is for the Government to be more forthcoming with

replies and solutions to the issues raised by him

"However, we feel sad because it seemed there is a policy to ignore Dr Mahathir's views and the issues he raised.

"For us young people who will always use Dr Mahathir's dynamic and progressive leadership as a benchmark for all future leaders, a deliberate effort to deny Dr Mahathir his

right to express himself is a mark of disrespect," he said.

Don said the chamber should not be accused as being against the Government as all it wanted was for the present administration to be true to its promises of being open and transparent.

He said any effort by the administration to block Dr Mahathir from making state-

ments would be going totally against that promise.

Senator Datuk Syed Ali Alhabshee said the present leadership's promises to be more open and transparent meant that there should not be any move by anyone to deny Dr Mahathir his right to speak up.

"Malaysia is a democratic country. Everyone has the right

to say what he or she feels, more so a former prime minister.

"As a citizen and former leader, he has valid grounds to express his views.

"As to whether what he said is accepted or otherwise is the Government's prerogative, but nobody should try to prevent him from saying what he feels," he added.