

No Action Decision on NST, PM's Right - Dr M

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SHAH ALAM - Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's decision not to take action against the New Straits Times for publishing a comic strip linked to the controversy over Prophet Muhammad caricatures is the prime minister's right, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Friday.

Saying that he had given his views on the issue, the former prime minister said the prime minister's decision was based on his own assessment and view.

"That's his right, the prime minister's right, his assessment and view," he told reporters after giving a talk entitled "Human Capital Development From Malaysia's Perspective" at the Young Leaders' Convention 2006 here.

Abdullah said in Kepala Batas today no action would be taken against the New Straits Times after its open apology for publishing the comic strip.

He described the issue as over after the newspaper expressed regret over what had happened and apologised openly.

Dr Mahathir is among leaders who had expressed regret over NST's action. Yesterday, he had said if the NST was not suspended, the editor must be suspended from duty for two to three months.

Asked to comment on RTM airing a footage related to the offensive caricatures of Prophet Muhammad in its Mandarin news segment recently as exposed by the NST, Dr Mahathir reiterated his call for the officer responsible to air the footage to be suspended from duty for a certain period.

"RTM should take action. Action should be taken against the officer responsible... suspend from duty for a while," he said.

On Feb 3, RTM aired the footage in its Mandarin news bulletin over TV2, showing a man reading a foreign newspaper which published the offensive caricatures.

Source: NST | www.nst.com.my