

THE STAR

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Dr M throws challenge over judicial crisis issue

PENANG: Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad challenged his detractors to show where he had gone wrong in the so-called judicial crisis of 1988 and take him to court.

He said all actions taken that led to the sacking of then Lord President Tun Salleh Abbas was done according to the law and constitution.

"If they (the critics) can show in which part I was wrong, I am willing to be charged in court," he said when fielding questions from Tanjong Malay Association members at a hotel here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said it was illogical for him or the Government to apologise to Salleh because actions were taken in accordance with provisions of the law.

On the five states and one Federal Territory currently controlled by the alternative coalition, Dr Mahathir said the opposition parties might be able to win the hearts of even the Malays if they could rule fairly.

On de facto PKR leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, he said cynically that "every-

body loved Anwar."

"When he is with the Jews, the Jews love him. When he is with the Muslims, the Muslims love him. When he is with the temple groups, they love him too.

"Everybody loves him. He is a convincing orator. He talked bad about me to foreigners. He told them I put him in jail," he said.

On talks that Anwar stood a chance to be the next prime minister, he said he would make a "good prime minister of Israel".

On Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's allegation that Dr Mahathir introduced the 30% nomination quota to contest top Umno posts to protect himself when he was in power, Dr Mahathir said the policy was to ensure only serious candidates contested the post.

"During my time it was easy to get 30% nomination.

"But not now, because most of the leaders in Umno today are 'yes men' who do everything to please the leadership," he said.



Still influential: Dr Mahathir arriving to open the Tanjong Malay Association AGM in Penang yesterday.