

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	9/12/2018

ANTI-ICERD RALLY

# PM 'THANKS' PEOPLE FOR TURNING UP

Organisers claim 300,000 took part, cops say it's 55,000, actual figure about 100,000

KUALA LUMPUR

PRIME Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he decided not to attend the "thanksgiving" anti-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination rally yesterday as he was already thankful enough.

In his trademark, tongue-in-cheek style, Dr Mahathir said "saya dah cukup syukur" (I am already thankful enough) when asked if he would attend the event at Dataran Merdeka.

He took a swipe at the organisers when he sarcastically thanked the "one million" people who turned up yesterday.

"We know the gathering was attended by one million people, and I thank them because they gathered for thanksgiving. One million people. Thank you," he said after chairing the Pakatan Harapan Presidential Council meeting.

The organisers had claimed

that they would gather a million participants but the figure was later revised to 300,000.

Police said only 55,000 people took part in the event organised by Umno, Pas, a coalition of Malay Muslim groups Ummah and National Sovereignty Secretariat.

However, it is likely the actual figure is closer to 100,000.

On the Human Rights Day celebration organised by the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) today, Dr Mahathir said he could not attend the event because of the government's stand on ICERD.

"Suhakam wants to accept ICERD, so how can I go?"

On the postponement of the Human Rights Day celebration, he said police were concerned about two events taking place on the same day.

"The police have to despatch officers to two areas and this will cause some pressure and shortage of manpower," he said.



Participants in the anti-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination rally at Dataran Merdeka yesterday. PIC BY SADDAM YUSOFF