

**'FREEDOM OF SPEECH'**

# DR M SLAMS NETIZEN'S ARREST

Suspect believed  
to have insulted  
Johor crown prince

**KUALA LUMPUR**

**P**RIME MINISTER Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad expressed regret over the detention of a social media user on Thursday night.

"I was informed that the authorities arrested a social media user last (Thursday) night.

"As I have stressed before, no leader in Malaysia is free of crit-

icism," he said yesterday.

He said people were free to criticise leaders if need be, and freedom of speech was important in a democracy.

"Except for threats, lies or insults to reigning monarchs, any leader can be criticised without affecting the people's right to speak," he said.

The online community was rocked by the arrest of Firdaus Abdillah Hamzah, also known as Pipiyapong, who is believed to have insulted Tunku Mahkota Johor Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim on Twitter. However, there has been no confirmation from the authorities. **Bernama**