

Dr M: I'll be firm in speaking out against India

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says he will be firm in speaking out against India despite the country boycotting Malaysian palm oil.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia might need to find another solution after the boycott by Indian palm oil refiners and traders.

This followed Malaysia's criticism of India's actions in the Kashmir region and its new citizenship law.

"We're concerned, of course,

because we sell a lot of palm oil to India but on the other hand, we need to be frank and when something goes wrong, we need to say it.

"If we allow things to go wrong and think only about the money, then a lot of things will go wrong," he told reporters after speaking at Bank Rakyat's Integrity Forum 2020 here yesterday.

With India being the largest importer of Malaysian palm oil, Dr Mahathir said there was a need to

find a solution to India's "snub".

"The fact is what's happening in India today is causing a lot of unhappiness among the people there and the whole world feels that it's wrong to discriminate against others," he said.

Last month, Dr Mahathir spoke out against India's then recently-approved citizenship legislation, which he said appeared discriminatory towards Muslims.

However, Primary Industries

Minister Teresa Kok on Monday dismissed reports that India was boycotting Malaysian palm oil.

She said it was understood from discussions that Indian palm oil buyers wanted Malaysia to increase its export of crude palm oil and reduce the export of refined palm oil.

On Jan 7, India was reported to have informally asked palm oil refiners and traders to avoid buying Malaysian palm oil.