

## **Special court on corruption formed to concentrate on such cases**

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PUTRAJAYA, March 19 (Bernama) -- A special court on corruption was proposed to ensure that such cases were given the time and emphasis by the courts, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the Special Cabinet Committee On Anti-Corruption (JKKMAR) which met today decided on the formation of the special court because hearings on corruption cases were considered as normal hearings without being accorded any priority.

"We, of course, do not interfere with the process of the courts, but this is a matter of great seriousness and the people are asking where is the punishment of the crime committed by certain individuals.

"We want to have a court that will hold hearings as soon as possible," he said after chairing the JKKMAR meeting at Perdana Putra, here today.

However, Dr Mahathir said the establishment of the special court would require some laws as it was supposed to change the nature of the courts.

Prime Minister said the special court would not affect the normal courts, however the JKKMAR was still trying to refine the proposal as there were currently three layers of courts.

"So if we introduce the special court for corruption, the appeal will still go to the Appeal Court and then to the Federal Court.

"That means that corruption cases may not get the attention of the ordinary court," he said.



Dr Mahathir said the judges for the special court must be appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, while the power of prosecution would come from the Attorney-General.

The Prime Minister said the meeting also decided that the song "Malaysia Bersih" (Clean Malaysia) will be sung in government functions after the singing of the national anthem "Negara Ku".

"We want to instill in the minds of the government servants the importance of cleaning our nation of corruption so that we will no longer be known as kleptocratic (nation) and return to become a democracy," he said.

Asked whether JKKMAR discussed the case involving 14 persons including seven civil servants who were protecting and receiving protection money from reflexology centre

operators, Dr Mahathir said it was not discussed in the meeting, however the committee was aware about the case.

"We will request the police and MACC (Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission) to investigate," he said.

Earlier today, a total of 14 persons were remanded to assist in the MACC's probe into allegations of protecting and receiving protection money from reflexology centre operators, in which the centers double as prostitution dens.

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