

Amendments to correct defects: PM

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BAGAN DATOH, Sun. — The Prime Minister today said any defects in the present constitutional monarchy should be corrected now. The system should be in keeping with the times, he said.

This was the aim of the Constitution Amendment Bill passed by Parliament and awaiting royal assent, he added.

He said what the Government was doing was merely to bring the system up-to-date. "If there are any defects in the system, they should be corrected from time to time," he said.

"As such, there should not be any misinterpretation of the Government's present intention in amending the Constitution."

The Government firmly believed in the constitutional monarchy and had no desire to abolish it, he said, adding:

were at the front of the crowd, interrupted the Prime Minister's speech several times. The Prime Minister was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Umno secretary-general Datuk Haji Mustapha Jabar, acting MCA deputy president Datuk Mak Hon Kam, Umno Youth leader Anwar Ibrahim and Perak Wanita Umno chief Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz. Perak Menteri Besar Ramli Ngah Talib, his wife, State Executive Councillors and Selangor Umno leaders greeted the Prime Minister when he alighted from the helicopter.

First time

To the loud beats of the *kompany*, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and some 5,000 people walked from the *padang* to a stage half a mile away.

the Government was even willing to work and co-operate with Pas, Berjasa and others because Umno was not greedy for power, he added.

But Pas, he said, had sent a memorandum to him expressing dissatisfaction with the constitution amendments.

"Pas had said it did not agree with the constitutional Parliamentary system."

The Prime Minister then challenged Pas to state openly that what they wanted was to set up an Islamic republic.

"But some people, even Umno members, have accused us of trying to replace the system with a republic. We have been denounced by our own members who accused us of trying to weaken or destroy the Malays." It was unfortunate that some people had misinterpreted the Government's intentions to confuse the people. "The rakyat is very confused now," he told a crowd of more than 30,000 people who turned up to greet him at the Selekoh District Council padang upon arrival from Langkawi to open the Rungkup multipurpose hall.

By FIZI AHMAD

● SEE ALSO PAGE 2

The crowd from all walks of life started gathering at the padang as early as 1pm, three hours before the Prime Minister arrived by helicopter. Local residents as well as people from Selangor and Perak were among the crowd. Hundreds of posters and banners, some of which proclaimed: "We want Mahathir's leadership," "Mahathir is still needed by the people" and "Betraying Umno is betraying the people and the country," were carried by the crowd waiting under the hot afternoon sun for the Prime Minister's arrival. Shouts of "Merdeka!" and "We want Mahathir!" from about 3,000 Umno Youth members wearing Mahathir T-shirts, who

This is the first time Selekoh town, which is already in the limelight because of the Rungkup State by-election, has swarmed with thousands of people causing a massive traffic jam. In his speech, Encik Ramli, who is also the Barisan Nasional director of operations for the by-election, said he was touched by the huge crowd that had gathered to greet the Prime Minister and that this was proof the people were united. He said such a show of unity would enable the country's leaders to continue to solve any problem the country face.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the aim of the party leaders now was to make sure the people were not confused over the constitution amendments. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional Government asked for power from the rakyat so it could work for their well-being.

Challenge

"By our own efforts we have achieved independence and are now in a position to decide our destiny. Nobody wanted to help us then," he said. The rakyat should be cautious and not trust those who have no intention of helping or protecting them. In the struggle for the well-being of the people,