

# MAHATHIR: I'M NOT OUT TO GRAB POWER

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SEREMBAN, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir-Mohamad said today he was "not out to grab power" for himself by amending the Constitution, as alleged by certain groups.

"I have enough power which the people can use any time," he said.

"We just want to make sure that these powers are not violated and ignored."

He was addressing about 25,000 people who turned up to watch lay the foundation stone for the new Dewan Perbandaran Seremban building here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government was merely changing a few sentences in the Constitution which were ambiguous in regards to the powers of the people in the Parliament and the Dewan Undangan Negeri.

"The administration of some States has been affected by the confusion over the issue," he said.

He said it was fortunate this had happened only at State level.

"If it was at parliamentary or national level, there would be chaos," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir warned the crowd that there were certain groups who had misconstrued the Government's motives and were now saying that it was "out to grab power."

"This is not true. We are not taking any

power from anyone. We are only clarifying the Constitution," he said to the applause of the crowd.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir accused these groups, including those who demonstrated in Kelantan and Trengganu, of confusing the people by giving the impression that there was a power struggle among the leaders of the country.

"They are opportunists whose aims are to eliminate Umno and the Barisan Nasional with their accusations," he said.

He said the Government did not want to arrest these people although it could do so.

"We are responsible people and do not act according to our whims and fancies," he said, adding that the people should stay calm as the Government upholds the law and Constitution.

He then led the crowd with three cheers of *Hidup Rakyat*.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also advised the people that they should not idolise their leaders: "I am not important. What is important is the people so they should not idolise anyone, including me."

"The question of the amendments is not a question for Mahathir because I am not important. It's the people's struggle that is important."

He then told the crowd that before independence "the people did not have a role to

play" in the country.

"All this was determined by the powers above," he said.

"However, the Malayan Union struggle was successful because of the support and help of the people and after independence we decided on a parliamentary democracy.

"This is the best system because it maintains the people's power while placing the Rulers in an esteemed position," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir added that when Malaysia achieved independence, well-known judges from a number of countries were involved in the drafting of the Constitution.

He said the judges were wise and tried to draw up a constitution which reflected the aspirations of the people. "But being humans, they made mistakes. We amend these defects when we find that they do not really serve the people," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the leaders were not people with absolute power who could do anything they liked.

"We are only representing the people and what we do is for the people," he said.

He also stressed that the Government had no intention of creating problems over the issue and that it was determined to solve it amicably so that all Malaysians could live happily and in peace.