

Only rakyat's voice can guarantee justice: PM

MALACCA, Mon. (23)

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today that only a system based on the people's voice can guarantee justice in Malaysia. There is no other way.

"The feudal system is over," he declared to loud cheers from more than 80,000 people who had turned up to meet him at the historic Padang Pahlawan here.

Speaking from a platform facing a jaded symbol of Colonisation, the Stadthuys built by the Dutch in 1650, he said:

"Those who ignore the people's voice will suffer

By FIZI AHMAD

because we want the people to determine their own future.

"Although we are independent, an independence that ignores the people's voice is meaningless."

He warned those who were determined to create anarchy in the country now that the Constitution Amendment Act has been enforced.

"The rakyat's way is very simple. They chose the people who are to rule the country. If the choice is found not to their liking they can choose again.

"That is why I would

like all of us to retain the system of the people's voice. This system is the only thing that can guarantee justice in the country. There is no other way."

He said shouts of "Hidup Mahathir" were not important but what was important was to shout "Hidup Rakyat" whereupon the crowd responded by shouts of "Hidup Rakyat".

"It is not Mahathir who makes the rakyat but the rakyat who made Mahathir.

"I am very certain our wishes will be achieved with the Constitution Amendment Bill issue settled.

"But there are many other

things for us to do. We should now concentrate on developing the country. For this we need to have the kind of enthusiasm shown here today."

He urged the people not to forget the spirit and enthusiasm which they had displayed and which had resulted in the settlement of the Constitution Amendment Bill issue.

The Prime Minister also said that some leaders who had fought together with the people had to do it behind the scenes because of the sensitivity of the issue.

He described Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen as the "Malaysian Kissinger" who had shuttled to and fro to find a settlement of the issue.

"We know his contribution and beliefs on this matter but

there are some who say that they did not compromise they did not have to show support for the rakyat in the open.

"They say the rakyat knows that they support the rakyat but sometimes if they do not see, it is hard to believe.

"It is important, no matter how little, for the leaders to come out into the open and show their support.

Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen has done a valuable thing. The others, even if they do not come here to Malacca, need to show up at other places at least. This is very important as we sometimes wish to see our leaders. It is not enough to see them only on television."

The Prime Minister said there were people who said that the popular support was false and that they were forced to come.

"These quarters are trying to create other issues since the amendments issue had been solved. They are also trying to play on emotions to keep the Rulers and the people apart.

No sacrifice

"If they want to know whether the people support us or not they can come and see."

He said the people must show that they are united and that nobody can deny them their wish.

Both the MCA and MIC supported the amendments but there are some quarters who say this support is non-existent."

Datuk Seri Mahtahir said none of the principles of the original amendments was sacrificed. "It is only that we changed the period from 15 to 60 days."

He urged the people not to listen to rumours that their leaders had backed down from their demands.

"It was the Malaysian way of doing things and was not a withdrawal or sacrificing principles. It was our way of compromise while the other proposals too were not received without deep thinking.

"We did not compromise anything at the expense of what we had wanted. The people who said those things

"They say the rakyat want the rakyat to feel cheated and also to make me re-rakyat but sometimes if the deal certain details in a way that will anger the other party.

"If this happens once again there will be a conflict between the two sides." The Prime Minister was angry

with a local daily which had said that although the Constitution Amendment Bill is to be signed, it would be an issue in the campaign for the Umno leadership elections on May 25.

The newspaper tried to bring this matter up hoping to increase its sales.

The crowd roared "close the newspaper" and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said: "I would like to remind these people that we are liberal and give them the right to publish. But they should not think that just because we are soft, we are weak.

"We can revoke whatever we have given. I hope they will be a bit polite because we do not want this matter to be exploited.

"We do not want this to be used to divide the good relations between the Rulers and the people or among the people themselves and more importantly between Umno and Umno.

"They would like to see Umno split because they know it is the backbone of the party that rules this country.

"They will be happy to see this if they succeed in making Umno fight with Umno and it can no longer play its role."