

RAKYAT MUST KNOW

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat — The mammoth explain-to-the people rallies have been necessary to head off trouble-makers insisting that the Government was trying to usurp other people's power, the Prime Minister told a cheering crowd today, 48 hours before the controversial Constitution amendments go amending.

And to roars of approval from 12,000 people at the Jalan Raja Muda Stadium, Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad sternly warned anyone trying to topple the Government by illegal means that they would be crushed. It was Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's first official visit to the federal capital.

To cries of "Betul! betul!" he said the will of the people must remain supreme. A Government which was voted in could also be voted out but anyone inheriting without being elected by the people "will not be afraid of the rakyat," he added. "This is why Malaysia chose a parliamentary democracy."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he had decided to personally explain at large rallies, instead of over television, why the Government had tabled the Constitution amendments (three of which did not find favour with the Rulers). "It was not to rally support for me to become a dictator, but to explain what the issue was all about," he said.

(There have been six rallies - at Alor Star, Bagan Datoh, Seremban, Klang, Batu Pahat and Malacca since late November.)

He said the Government had made a minor amendment to the Constitution because one of the clauses was not clear. Because of this, there were a few incidents which questioned the effectiveness of the Constitution.

The lack of clarity centred on where the power should be, and there has been a misuse of power on some occasions," he said. "This happened at state level. If it had happened at federal level, it could have had grave consequences."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said when Malaysia became independent, it was decided that the country would be a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch as Head of State.

"However, because of a certain vagueness in some of the clauses of the Constitution, there have been misinterpretations so much so that it appeared that Malaysia did not uphold

parliamentary democracy and that Parliament had no power," he said.

The Government, he stressed, was not trying to usurp anyone's power but was trying to correct matters which were not clear in the Constitution. The people who ascribed sinister

motives to the Government's actions were only trying to confuse the people.

Hence the rallies. But it was clear from the turnout at the rallies, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said, that the people understood and supported them fully.

"It is because of this support that the Government was able to solve the problem that had been known out of quarters by certain

He said the amendments to the Constitution were a small matter in comparison with Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965. "The

"They accepted it because it was for their good. It is also

for their good that they accept the Constitution amendments." Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that the amendments have been "passed" and the Government had given its word that they would be re-amended so that they will reflect the Rulers' views. The amendments will be tabled at a special sitting of the Dewan Rakyat on Monday.

After Monday, he said, there could be no more accusations that any one party had been ignored.

He also said that the amendments to be tabled on Monday were no different from the original amendments but were being changed nevertheless because this was what the Rulers' had wanted. He said the new amendments were proof that the people could and were prepared to "give-and-take."

There was only one principal on which the Government would not compromise: and that was that the will of the people must be supreme.

"In a modern world, we respect the voices of the majority and not that of the minority," he said. "If we ignore the majority and listen to the minority, there will be dissatisfaction amongst the majority which will have grave implications for the country."

"We do not care if others say we have won or lost. What is important is that Malaysia and its people win."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also called on the people to be prepared to make sacrifices because they would reap the benefits at a later date.

He said it was the existing unity among the rakyat which would sustain them through hard times.

Among the welcoming crowd at the Jalan Raja Muda Stadium (formerly the TPCA Stadium) were government servants, who had been left off from work early, and members and officials from the Federal Territory Barisan Nasional. Under the original Constitution amendments passed by Parliament in August, the decision to declare an Emergency lay only with the Prime Minister and the assent of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Rulers was not needed for legislation to be passed.

Royal Assent to the amendments was held up while the Government and Rulers discussed modifications. Finally, on Dec 15, Royal Assent was given on the condition that the amendments be modified this month.