

Dr M: No one gains when MPs resign

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — The Prime Minister today said that elected representatives who resign their seats and re-contest in the same constituencies to test their popularity are wasting public time and money.

"The people and the nation gain no benefit from their resignations," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said when tabling for second reading the Bill to amend the Constitution disqualifying for five years elected representatives who resigned their seats from re-contesting.

Dr Mahathir said the absence of relevant provisions in the Constitution allowed Members of Parliament and State Assemblymen to resign solely for the purpose of re-contesting in the same constituencies.

He told the Dewan Rakyat if this was allowed to continue there will be more resignations by elected members which will result in the loss of time, effort and money.

In tabling the Federal Constitution (Amendment) Act 1990, he said the amendments were necessary because currently there were no provisions to

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prevent an MP or State Assemblyman from resigning and seeking re-election in the same constituency.

"The proposed amendment to Article 48 will mean that an elected representative who resigns will cease to be a Member of Parliament or the respective State Assemblies with

effect from the date the resignation is tendered.

"The amendments also provide that the disqualification period from Parliament or State Assemblies shall be five years," he said.

Among the other amendments under the Bill were the composition of the Public Services Commission and the Education Services Commission.

Dr Mahathir said at present Article 139 of the Constitution provides that the Public Services Commission should comprise a chairman, deputy chairman and not less than four other members or more than 30 members.

Article 141A provides that the Education Services Commission should comprise a chairman, deputy chairman and not more than eight members.

"With the proposed amendments to these articles, the two commissions will be able to increase their membership by obtaining an order from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

"The amendments are necessary in view of the fact that the size of the civil service is likely to increase from time to time," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the proposed amendment is in line with the provision to allow the King to appoint more High Court judges.

He said the amendment to Article 151 is to delete the requirement for the King to consult the Lord President of the Supreme Court before appointing relevant members of the Advisory Board to discuss appeals by restricted residents.

He said the purpose of the amendment was to ensure consistency in the procedure for the appointment of a chairman and other members of the board.