

# Mahathir: Liberal style of govt to stay

By PAUL GABRIEL

ALOR STAR: Malaysia will continue with its open and liberal style of government to accommodate the opposition, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister said the present system had contributed to a healthy democracy, with the government having to contend with many opposition MPs and assemblymen.

The Barisan Nasional Government, he added, did not subscribe nor believed in a "total mandate" in which the opposition would be deprived of even a single seat.

15 SEP 1991  
Dr Mahathir said the government only wished for a firm majority to enable it to function smoothly.

"Though we have no ulterior motives, we could make a slip if there is no one to correct us," he told newsmen yesterday after opening the third Kubang Pasu Umno delegates meeting in Jitra.

Dr Mahathir had been asked to comment on his Singapore counterpart Goh Chok Tong's response after the Aug 31 Singapore polls that he might modify his consultative style of government.

The ruling PAP lost four seats, the biggest setback since 1968,

with the lowest votes cast for the party Dr Mahathir said he did not think that the Singapore electorate's decision to return four opposition MPs reflected the failure of the PAP.

"Instead, I think the PAP has won marvellously, considering the voting trend of Singaporeans over the years.

To a question whether the ISA could be invoked against those in the Al-Arqam movement who continued to spread deviationist teachings, Dr Mahathir said the government needed to ascertain whether its activities posed a threat.

The movement has been banned from holding ceramahs or other activities in ministries and government departments and agencies as well as schools.

On MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu's suggestion that the Government set up a trust fund similar to the Amanah Saham Nasional for Indians, Dr Mahathir said that all government programmes were designed for everyone's benefit.

Earlier in his address, Dr Mahathir, who heads the Kubang Pasu Umno division, called on party members to maintain the party's strength and work for the success of Vision 2020.