

PM: Ruling vindicates

our view

NOV 9 1991

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday the High Court decision on the Kelantan anti-hop law vindicated Umno's view that the amendment to the Kelantan Constitution was undemocratic.

The Prime Minister and Umno president said he, nevertheless, expected Pas to appeal against it.

He said it was Umno's view that if the amendment had been made prior to last year's general election and the people had accepted it consciously, then it was appropriate that the two Assemblymen be stripped of their seats.

However, he said the two were elected under the belief that they would not lose their seats if they left to join another party.

The people, he said, were not informed of the pre-conditions.

"We are not looking at who were elected but at the rights of the people," he said in response to questions by newsmen about the High Court decision at the Putra World Trade Centre where the Umno general assembly was in session.

Asked whether the same decision affected Sabah where a similar anti-hop law existed, Dr Mahathir said the situation was differ-

ent because the people were warned before the State elections that State Assemblymen would lose their seats if they snatched par-tips.

Asked if he thought the decision would encourage more Semangal 46 Assemblymen to join Umno, he said, "It is up to them but that is not the issue. The issue here is the people's rights."

Dr Mahathir said the anti-hop law was akin to creating a law this year to punish offences that were committed last year.

If democracy and the people's rights were upheld, such laws should not be have been formulated.

"It is like creating a law now to punish anyone previously wearing blue clothes. However, if the law was created then, nobody would be wearing blue," he added.

Deputy Umno president Encik Ghafar Baba said the party's lawyers had been instructed to file another suit against the Kelantan State Assembly for expelling the two Umno members.

He said the action would be based on the fact that both men were not Semangal 46 members (as found by the High Court in another action) and were thus not subject to the anti-hop law.