

# PM: Changes not retrospective

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the proposed constitutional amendments will not be made retrospective, meaning only those Rulers who commit any offence after the amendments become law will be subjected to them.

The Prime Minister said the proposed amendments will also stipulate that in the event any Ruler is involved in a wrongdoing or has misbehaved, he will be disqualified from pardoning himself.

He was speaking to reporters after chairing an Umno supreme council meeting today.

"The power to pardon in

such circumstances will be vested with the Conference of Rulers. If the family members of a Ruler are involved, the powers to pardon will be vested in another Ruler appointed by the Council of Rulers," he said.

If the Yang di-Pertua Negeri, who heads the Pardons Board in the State, is involved in any wrongdoing, the Chief Minister will assume the powers to pardon.

If the family members of the Yang di-Pertua Negeri are involved, he said, the respective Chief Ministers will advise the Yang di-Pertua Negeri on the matter.

When asked if a Ruler can be disqualified from holding his position in the event he

is convicted in court, the Prime Minister said this will depend on the State Constitution.

"At the Federal level, there exists a provision in the Constitution whereby a Yang di-Pertuan Agong can be removed if five of his fellow Rulers decide so," he said.

Dr Mahathir maintained that the Constitution will still define that any suggestion or motion for the abolition of the monarchy will constitute sedition.

"You cannot propose the abolition of the monarchy. That will constitute sedition. Action can be taken under the Sedition Act," said the Prime Minister.

Responding to reporters' questions on why only Parliament and State Assemblies are allowed to discuss issues related to royalty and not individuals and the Press, Dr Mahathir said:

"It is because such matters come under the purview of the Sedition Act.

"At present there are no plans to amend the Sedition Act since the special Parliamentary meeting has been called to specifically debate the constitutional amendments.

"We will look into the provisions of the Sedition Act later. But the Press will be allowed to report the proceedings of the special parliamentary meeting."