

CNS3962

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Mahathir - Rulers

AMENDMENTS TO REMOVE LEGAL IMMUNITY OF RULERS IN LINE WITH ISLAM,
MAHATHIR

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KARACHI, Feb 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the amendment to the Federal Constitution to remove **the** legal immunity of the Malay Rulers was in line with Islamic teachings.

He said the amendments were made to prevent the people from rebelling as they could no longer be patient with the Rulers' actions such as wasting the country's money and victimising them.

Addressing **some** 250 Malaysian students at the Pearl Continental Hotel here, he said the excesses of the Rulers contravened Islamic teachings.

"Before the people toppled the Rulers and the monarchy system **as has** already happened in several countries, the government had to act quickly to save the monarchy **system** through constitution amendments to place the Rulers in the rightful place,+ the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir said the amendments were in accordance with the wishes of the people who did not want the Rulers to be above the law if they committed offences such as abusing them. -- more

▼17/02/23-33MST

CNS3965

U GE 17-02 00197 ED512

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Mahathir - Rulers 2 Karachi

Dr Mahathir was confident that with the amendments, the Rulers were now aware that they could not act according to their **whims** and fancies as they would have to face the consequences of their actions.

Asked by a student as to why the Rulers' extravagances should be made public, the Prime Minister said efforts behind closed doors to correct **them** since the time of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman had not been fruitful.

"**Some** Rulers misbehaved even more after criticisms behind closed doors," he said.

Such exposure of their misdeeds had made them more conscious of their actions as could be seen from the present reaction, he said.

On his visit to Pakistan and Bangladesh, he said it was aimed at forging brotherly relations among Muslim countries*and to step up efforts to help any oppressed Muslim nation.

Dr Mahathir said Muslims were being oppressed everywhere **now** because **Islamic** countries were **weak** and factional and the followers **of Islam** lacked interest in acquiring skills and knowledge such as in the fields of engineering and medicine. -- more

▼17/02/23-58MST

CNS3967

U GE 18-02 00193 ED513

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Mahathir - Rulers 3 Karachi

Dr Mahathir urged the Malaysian students to study hard and return home and put their knowledge to good use' by contributing towards the progress and development of the nation.

'He said Malaysia's economic growth was now only behind that of China. Malaysia's economic growth rate last year was eight per cent compared to China's 12 per cent.

He said efforts to make Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020 was for the benefit of the future generation "and not for the benefit of my generation. WC will no longer be round then."

On the sufferings of Muslims in Bosnia and Somalia, he said Malaysia was ready to send troops to help overcome the problems faced by the people in the two countries.

In Somalia, Malaysian soldiers could act as a moderating influence on groups locked in dispute so that aid could reach the people who were suffering while in Bosnia, the Malaysian soldiers could help the people in that country and prevent their continued oppression by the Serbs, Dr Mahathir said. -- more

▼18/02/00-13MST

CNS3969

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Mahathir - Rulers 4 (last) Karachi

The Prime Minister Said, Pakistan had agreed to offer 30 more places to Malaysian students intending to study medicine.

Also present at the function were Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Dadawi and Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

Dr Mahathir left for home tonight after attending a reception hosted by the Governor of Sindh Mahmood Haroon at Government House here.

Dr Mahathir last visited Pakistan in 1984. -- Bernama

♥18/02/00-18MST