

Sultan of Kelantan will lose dignity, says Dr M

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KUALA LUMPUR: Unmo has told the Sultan of Kelantan that he will lose his dignity as a Ruler if he continues to interfere in the state's politics and administration, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said a majority of the people in Kelantan had demonstrated against the Sultan's continuous interference and that he (the Sultan) might run the risk of not being recognised as the Ruler by the people.

"If a Sultan is not re-

cognised as a Sultan, he will lose his *maruah* (dignity)," he told a press conference after chairing the party's supreme council meeting.

The Prime Minister added that a majority of the people in Kelantan had also shown their "non-recognition" of the Sultan through the demonstration and it had degraded the Ruler's dignity.

He said the party supported the stand taken by the people who were in the demonstration.

"We (Umno) are togeth-

er with the people of Kelantan in asking the Sultan not to interfere anymore," he said.

Asked on what basis did Umno consider that a majority of the people in Kelantan were against the Sultan for his interference, Dr Mahathir said it was reflected through the demonstration and what the people were saying.

He also expressed regret that the Sultan refused to accept the memorandum handed by the people, and said the action confirmed his interference in the state's poli-

tics and administration.

"He has also shown that he is undemocratic by refusing to accept the memorandum," he said.

Dr Mahathir also dismissed claims by the Kelantan Menteri Besar that the demonstration was an attempt by the Federal Government to topple the PAS-led Government.

"If I really want to topple (the Government) there are many ways that I can do it and we don't have to organise a demonstration.

"We can dry up the (development) funds (to the

state). There are many other ways but we will not do it as this is a small problem for us.

"However, we are embarrassed that this Ruler is giving a bad name to the monarchy."

Dr Mahathir also said that the Government would look for a way to overcome the reluctance of the Johor palace to give consent to the new State Secretary.

"One way or another we will solve the problem. If there are no options, we will create some (options)."