

# PM: No need to amend constitution

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**KOTA BARU:** There is no need to amend the Constitution in order to compel the various states to accept the proposed streamlining of Islamic family laws, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

At present, all the Malay Rulers were in agreement with the Government, Dr Mahathir said after addressing a get-together with the people here yesterday evening.

"As such, there is no need to resort to such a measure in order to obtain compliance," he said in reference to Terengganu, which had reportedly wanted the *hudud* and *qisas* laws incorporated into the uniform *syariah* laws before it would accept the government's proposal.

Dr Mahathir also scoffed at concerns raised by certain quarters that there was a lack of transparency over the RM10bil public fund managed by Valuecap.

"How much more of transparency that they want? Do you think others (foreign investment funds) practise that themselves? In any case, some people do not like to see our stock

market increase in value, and therefore, some have been selling their shares in order to depress the market."

The newly-established Valuecap is an investment holding company equally owned by Khazanah Nasional Bhd, Permodalan Nasional Bhd and Kumpulan Wang Amanah Pencen.

On whether it was his personal ambition to retake Kelantan before he retires in October, Dr Mahathir, who has been the state Umno chairman for seven years before Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah took over in 1999, replied: "Whether I retire or not, we want to retake Kelantan."

Earlier, when addressing the crowd of about 6,000 at the Sultan Ismail College field, he said Malaysian Muslims needed to throw all their support behind Umno as it was the true champion of Islam, both domestically and globally.

According to Dr Mahathir, Umno had time and again promptly answered the call to help Muslims in these troubled times, and its track record was proof enough.

Referring to Muslims in other countries, he said they were at present being attacked, detained, and roundly

oppressed by many stronger powers all over the world unchecked.

"For example, economic sanctions on Iraq had resulted in 1.5 million deaths, and all this happens in a world that is supposedly civilised. But Malaysia has never hesitated to voice its objections against stronger powers, including the superpowers, whenever we feel they are doing the wrong thing."

On PAS' readiness to promise heaven to its supporters in order to cover up their earthly shortcomings, Dr Mahathir said people needed to ask themselves whether all the injustices and suffering were God's will.

To the voters in Kelantan, Dr Mahathir pledged that he would bring about significant changes to the state should people return Barisan Nasional to power in the next general election.

"The Kelantanese have been mired in poverty and deprivation for far too long, and we will bring this to an end if we can take over the administration of the state. As such, it is the duty of everyone to support Umno if they really claim to be Muslims," he said.

Today, he will address a mammoth rally in Jeli before returning home.