

Dr M: HK Occupy 'too small' to be for democracy
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Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has brushed aside the Hong Kong democratic movement saying such action requires large numbers of people.

He reportedly told an audience in Hong Kong that the those who are part of the month-long Occupy Central movement there are not "genuinely fighting for democracy".

South China Morning Post reported today that the octogenarian, in an audience with "business elites and political figures", that the occupiers were a "small number of people" trying to change government policies.

"If you are going to fight for democracy, you must persuade the majority of the people to (participate)," Mahathir (right) was quoted as saying.

"But when you take to the streets and your number is very small in comparison to the population, and you force the majority of the people to accept your views, that is not democracy."

"The best way to handle it is to handle it before the occupying," Mahathir said of ways to handle the occupy movement.

He was quoted as saying this in response to a question posed by an-anti Occupy Central leader.

He added that "killing or beating" people into submission is also "not the solution".

Instead, he advocated waiting it out as he believes the protestors do not have the stamina to go on forever.

"Over time they will get tired, and other people will be against them because they are undermining the economy, depriving people of their livelihood."

Mahathir, who served as Malaysia's PM for 22 years, was known for the high-handed response to protests.

This included the use of tear gas and laws that provided for detention without trial.

The Occupy Central movement is a civil disobedience movement to demand democracy in Hong Kong and protest China's intervention in the special administration region.

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