

Dr M Welcomes Eight Year Term Limit For PM
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KUALA LUMPUR -- Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he welcomed a suggestion to limit the term of a Prime Minister to eight years.

He said the suggestion should be considered but if someone had given the best service and had not committed anything which could be detrimental to the country, an extension would be appropriate.

"For example if we limit the period of power to a term, it will not enable a leader to perform his duties efficiently and will fail to carry out what has been planned," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who had held the position for 22 years from 1981 until 2003, said this during a question-and-answer session at a forum entitled Current Challenges of Democracy System and Malaysian Constitution Towards Achieving Vision 2020 here, yesterday.

He said this in response to a suggestion by Pasir Mas member of parliament Ibrahim Ali who proposed that a person holding the post of a Prime Minister be limited to only eight years.

Dr Mahathir said the duration was relevant as normally after taking over the the country's leadership, the person has to first learn about it.

"The first year is the year to start learning the intricacies of governing, the second year to plan and set out various programmes while the third year is the year for him to implement what he has planned.

"The fourth year comes the general election. So where he has the time to carry out what he had planned to do," he said.

In another development, when commenting on the Internal Security Act, Dr Mahathir said the act was good but should not be misused.

"ISA is not a necessity and I also had suggested that ISA be abolished. However after getting advice from my adviser namely the police, ISA was not abolished.

"This ISA is good for us, look at Ibrahim, after he was in and out, he became good," Mahathir added.

(Bernama)