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# King, Malay rulers not just rubber stamps, says Mahathir

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**PETALING JAYA:** The Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Malay rulers are not mere rubber stamps but have some executive roles to play.

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is nothing in the Constitution that talks about the separation of powers between the government and the King and Malay rulers, and they have the right to comment on iMalaysia Development Berhad (iMDB) investigations and the RM2.6 billion allegedly deposited in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak's personal account.

"It is true that the (Yang di-Pertuan) Agong and the Malay rulers are constitutional monarchs.

"But that does not mean they are just rubber stamps to validate all the acts of their governments," the former prime minister wrote in

his recent blogpost.

He was responding to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's recent remark that the Conference of Rulers is subject to the separation of powers doctrine.

Mahathir said the rulers may sometimes act on their own discretion and consult any person or body of persons that may not necessarily be the Cabinet.

"Obviously, if petitions are made or there is a public clamour, the rulers may not listen only to the Cabinet.

"The Agong may listen to other people than the Cabinet. This is how it should be as failure of the Cabinet to address complaints by the people may require the Agong and the rulers to urge the government to respond," Mahathir said.

He said Article 40 of the Federal Constitution states the Yang di-

Pertuan Agong is entitled to any information available to the Cabinet while Article 40(2) allows the monarch to exercise discretion in the appointment of the prime minister and also in withholding consent to dissolve Parliament.

He added that Article 41 states the Yang di-Pertuan Agong is the supreme commander of the armed forces of the federation which is not merely limited to the privilege of wearing a uniform.

On Oct 8, Ahmad Zahid had said that the government has always respected decrees issued by the Conference of Rulers, and is in the process of working out a debt rationalisation plan for iMDB.

He added that Najib and all other Cabinet members fully support and respect the country's monarchy system and the separation of powers, including the provision regarding the powers of the Malay rulers.