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'Dr M's motives suspect'

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LIMITING KING'S POWERS: Ex-PM

now not in favour of 1994 amendment, says Hisham

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UMNO vice-president Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein has questioned former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's true intentions behind pushing through a plan in 1994 to remove certain powers from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Hishammuddin was commenting on Dr Mahathir's recent apology for amending the Federal Constitution to make the approval and signature of the king unnecessary to legalise an act of Parliament.

"Dr Mahathir's argument for it during that time was to ensure that no person or institution could deny efforts to develop the country.

"But, today, his argument is different. We sometimes ask ourselves whether Dr Mahathir was sincere when he asked us to support his

plan because, now, he has apologised to the Malay rulers," he said after opening the Gombak Umno division delegates' meeting here yesterday.

Hishammuddin, who was an Umno Youth leader in the 1990s, said Dr Mahathir's about-turn would be judged and evaluated by future generations.

Dr Mahathir, who served as prime minister from 1981 to 2003, on Thursday apologised for the amendment of the Federal Constitution in May 1994, which removed the requirement for the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's assent before a new act of Parliament came into force.

"I sincerely apologise for making the amendment as it is open to misinterpretation.



Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein addressing Gombak Umno division delegates yesterday. Pic by Rasul Azli Samad

"It would seem that because of the amendment, the new National Security Council law has become operational, even though the Yang di-Pertuan Agong has not signed it," he said on his blog.

Hishammuddin, in addressing some 190 delegates earlier, also said Dr Mahathir's Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia would not get "an inch" of support from the people of Johor after the latter's criticism of the "Bangsa Johor" concept.

He said the concept should not

be politicised as it was introduced in 1920 as a means to nurture unity among Johoreans.

"Please do not challenge the sultan of Johor or the state government.

"The new party will not get even an inch of support from Johor."

During the 20th Perdana Discourse Series recently, Dr Mahathir reportedly said unity among Malaysians could collapse if states like Johor practised parochialism.

On another matter, Hishammuddin, who is also defence minister, said Saturday's illegal "Tangkap Malaysian Official 1" rally failed to achieve any positive outcome.

He said while the allegations against 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) were serious, the public should remain patient and allow the legal process to take its course.

"The prime minister had said that those named in the United States' Department of Justice civil complaint on 1MDB should clear their names. The (legal) process will take time.

"Before (the case is settled), are we going to hold protests every day?

"I don't see how this will achieve anything."