

WE NEED GOOD LAWS, SAYS PM

Draconian Laws used by previous govt will be dropped, says Dr Mahathir

PETALING JAYA

PRIME Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government will run the country justly instead of adhering to draconian laws adopted by the previous administration.

He said the people would feel secure when the administration followed the rule of law.

"Draconian laws resulted in the people feeling very insecure because they could be arrested and detained without the need to be heard in a court of law.

"Although they (the previous administration) got rid of that law, they replaced it with another bad law.

"But the new government will repeal the laws and introduce new ones. Malaysia needs to have good laws and not draconian laws," he said in his keynote address at LawAsia's inaugural Constitutional and Rule of Law Conference here yesterday.

Present were Attorney-General Tan Sri Tommy Thomas and Bar Council president Datuk Abdul Fareed Abdul Gafoor.

Dr Mahathir said some procedures must be followed to introduce new laws and replace draconian ones.

He, however, reminded lawmakers that a change needed to take place and the government must possess a two-thirds majority in Parliament to amend the Federal Constitution to replace inherited repressive laws.

"There are procedures that we need to go through. We need to



Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad visiting LawAsia's Constitutional and Rule of Law Conference exhibition in Petaling Jaya yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

have a two-thirds majority to change any law that affects the constitution. Since we don't have a two-thirds (majority), we are stuck with the old laws, there's no majority to change them."

He said it was important for the government to replace outdated and irrelevant laws.

"It is not only about the rule of

law, but the rule of good law. We achieve that via democracy, by electing people who subscribe to the idea of the rule of law.

"If you have these people and they head the government, but ignore or abuse the law, it is bad for the country. You can see from the previous government that they supported and passed bad

laws in Parliament.

"And now, we are trying to abolish bad laws but it not as easy as we thought."

He said when Pakatan Harapan took the helm from Barisan Nasional, it was not only to change the regime, but also to set up a better administration using a new approach, including the rule

of law.

Dr Mahathir said the people expected immediate changes and would criticise the government if it failed to keep its election promises.

"We are victims of our manifesto. We will have to adhere to our promises as much as we can, but it is not easy."