

# Dr M: A govt by rule of law

'People will feel secure when the country is run according to that'

**PETALING JAYA:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has assured the people that the government will run the country according to the rule of law and not what he described as the draconian laws of the previous administration.

The Prime Minister said the rakyat will feel secure when the government rules the country according to the law.

"The 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 laws. Malaysia needs to have good laws and not draconian laws," he said yesterday when delivering his keynote address and opening LAWASIA's inaugural Constitutional and Rule of Law Conference, here.

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

Dr Mahathir said there were procedures that had to be followed in order to introduce new laws and replace the draconian ones.

The government must have a two-thirds majority in Parliament to amend the Federal Constitution to replace the bad laws that were inherited from the previous government, he said.

There are procedures that (we) need to go through. We need to



Can I help you?: Dr Mahathir having a chat with a robot at the LAWASIA conference and exhibition in Petaling Jaya. — Bernama

have a two-thirds majority to change any law that affects the constitution.

"Since there is no two-thirds (majority), we are stuck with the old laws, no majority to change the laws," he explained.

Citing an example, Dr Mahathir said that when the government attempted to get rid of the anti-lake news law for the benefit of the rakyat in September last year, some

MPs did not have the same idea.

"We must get rid of the old and bad laws. For instance, anti-fake news. But (we) find that only some people in the Dewan Rakyat want to get rid of this law.

"We need to stop people from putting fake news on social media. It affects the government," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it is important for the government to replace and change bad laws, especially those

introduced since independence which are now outdated and irrelevant.

"It's not about the rule of law only, but 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's too bad for the country.

"You can see from the previous government that they supported and passed bad laws in Parliament. Now, we are trying to disentangle these bad laws but it is not as easy as we thought," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that when Pakatan Harapan took over the helm from Barisan Nasional, it was not only to change the regime but to also set up a better administration using a new approach, including the rule of law.

He said this was because the rakyat expect immediate changes or will criticise the government if it fails to keep its election promises.

He acknowledged that it was easy to make promises in a general election but not so easy to implement the manifesto.

"We are the victims of our manifesto. We will have to adhere to our promises as much as we can, but it is not easy," he said - **Bernama**

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