

Political uprising unlikely in Malaysia, says Dr M
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 — Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today praised the government for listening to the concerns of Malaysians, dismissing chances of a political uprising any time soon.

"I don't see how the Arab Spring can spread to us. If we don't take care of the people then of course they will rebel.

"But we have worked hard to create opportunities for the people such as giving land, industrialisation, job opportunities," he told reporters here.

Commenting on the government's tabling of the Peaceful Assembly Bill, Dr Mahathir (picture) said it proved the government was quick to adjust and listen to public concerns.

"I think this government is listening to the people very quickly; in my time, I don't respond at all.

"You can interpret it as giving in or you can interpret it as being sensitive," he added.

The Najib administration recently pledged a slew of reforms to allow more space for civil liberties.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak tabled in Parliament last week a Bill regulating public assemblies.

The proposed law has been criticised by opposition leaders as well as civil society groups as "haphazard" and they have demanded it be withdrawn completely.

Provisions of the Bill concerning the notification period for an assembly were amended after last Friday's Cabinet meeting.

"He (Najib) is trying very hard, he has the hard task because he has all these crises and there are the problems of people taking potshots at him, he doesn't have the majority that I had," said Dr Mahathir, the country's longest-serving prime minister.

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