

MAHATHIR - HOLIDAYS

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JOHOR BA HARU, MAR. 5 (BERNAMA) -- (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THAT IT WAS NOT FEASIBLE TO INTRODUCE A UNIFORM WEEK-END HOLIDAYS FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY IN VIEW OF THE OBJECTIONS RAISED BY SEVERAL QUARTERS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID SEVERAL PROPOSALS FOR A UNIFORM HOLIDAYS HAD BEEN MADE A LONG TIME AGO BUT THERE WERE SOME STATES WHICH WERE +NOT QUITE AGREEABLE+ TO THE IDEA.

+THE FORMER FEDERATED MALAY STATES WHICH NOW OBSERVE WEEK-END HOLIDAYS ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MIGHT NOT AGREE TO ANY CHANGE AND LIKEWISE FORMER UNFEDERATED MALAY STATES MIGHT NOT WANT TO CHANGE THEIR WEEK-END HOLIDAYS WHICH FALL OUT THURSDAY AND FRIDAY.

+BUT I HAVE NOT GIVEN THE MATTER A THOUGHT,+ HE ADDED WHEN HE WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON A CALL BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT, DATUK HAJI SUHAIMI KAMARUDDIN, FOR A UNIFORM WEEK-END HOLIDAYS FOR THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SUHAIMI, WHO ALSO HEADS THE UMNO BUREAU ON LABOUR AND MANPOWER, HAD PROPOSED THAT ALL THE STATES IN THE COUNTRY HAVE THEIR WEEK-END HOLIDAYS ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY WHEN HE OPENED A COURSE ON LABOUR HERE. -- MORE 1710/II

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DATUK SUHAIMI ALSO FELT THAT THE STATE SHOULD COMPROMISE AND HAVE THEIR WORKING HOURS FROM 8:15 A.M. TO 5 P.M. SO THAT THEIR WORKERS COULD REST ON FRIDAY AND SUNDAY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID: +THE PROPOSAL CAN BE IMPLEMENTED BUT THE MAIN QUESTION IS WHETHER ALL THE STATES WOULD AGREE?+

HE SAID THE QUESTION OF A UNIFORM WEEK-END HOLIDAYS HAD BEEN TURNED INTO A POLITICAL ISSUE WHERE CERTAIN QUARTERS HAD ASKED WHY THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT DECLARED FRIDAY AS A UNIFORM WEEK-END HOLIDAY FOR THE COUNTRY.

+ALTHOUGH THERE IS NOTHING IN THE ISLAMIC RELIGION WHICH SAYS THAT MUSLIMS MUST NOT WORK ON FRIDAY, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO TRY TO MISINTERPRET IT,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA 1713/II