

MAHATHIR - DOCTOR

84
KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 21 (BERNAMA) -- (P) DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY HE HAD PERSONALLY DIRECTED THAT THE NEW SALARY SCHEME FOR DOCTORS BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY TO OVERCOME THE FRUSTRATIONS OF DOCTORS IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

+I APPROVED IT LAST WEEK AND THE DIRECTIVE TO IMPLEMENT THE SALARY SCHEME CAME STRAIGHT FROM ME,+ SAID THE PRIME MINISTER. HE MADE THE STATEMENT IN THE WAKE OF GROUSES FROM THE DOCTORS IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WERE SLOW IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROMOTION SCHEME-AS ANNOUNCED BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK MUSAHITAM, LAST APRIL.

THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN PARTICULAR BESIDES GRIEVING OVER THE POOR SALARY SCHEME OF ITS DOCTORS WERE NOW FACING SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS AND OTHER STAFF WHICH FORCED THE CLOSURE OF THE HOSPITAL'S CARDIAC INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (CICU).

EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE HAD ALSO ISSUED A GENERAL DIRECTIVE TO ALL MINISTRIES TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS.

+IN THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, HE SAID AS IT WAS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE EDUCATION MINISTRY, THE OFFICIALS SHOULD KNOW THE TRUE PICTURE AND WOULD ACT ON IT. -- MORE MAHATHIR - DOCTORS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD NOT SAY WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WAS SLOW IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME FOR DOCTORS BUT SAID THE PROCESS OF REVIEWING THE SALARY SCHEME USUALLY TOOK A LONG TIME.

HE AGREED THAT THE PROMOTION FOR DOCTORS AND ALSO THE INCREASE IN THEIR SALARIES WOULD NOT HELP OVERCOME THE SHORTAGE OF GOVERNMENT DOCTORS AS, THEY WOULD STILL LEAVE THE SERVICE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR WHICH GAVE THEM MORE LUCRATIVE INCOME.

+WHATEVER ACTION WE TAKE, WE STILL CAN'T OVERCOME THE SHORTAGE AND THIS WILL CONTINUE SO LONG AS THERE ARE DIFFERENCES IN INCOME BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE DOCTORS,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE SURGEON OF THE CICU, DR. RAZALLI HASHIM HAD MET HIM TO EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE CLOSURE OF THE UNIT.

*THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH I CAN DO: IF PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO WORK, WANT TO RESIGN AND GO INTO PRIVATE PRACTICE AND DON'T WANT TO BECOME ANAESTHETISTS BECAUSE WE DON'T PAY ENOUGH... THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO.+ -- MORE 1800/MB

MAHATHIR - DOCTORS 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THE SHORTAGE OF GOVERNMENT DOCTORS AND THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SO FOR AS LONG AS PEOPLE THINK ABOUT EARNING HIGH SALARIES.+

HE STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO WAY THE GOVERNMENT COULD MATCH THE EARNINGS OF DOCTOR IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

+SO EVEN IF WE RAISE THE SALARIES OF DOCTORS IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE, THE ONLY THING THAT WILL HAPPEN IS THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL RAISE THEIR CHARGES AND WILL STILL HAVE MORE. WE JUST CAN'T COMPETE WITH THEM.* -- BERNAMA 1805/MB