

B E203 AAE
SAMY-MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 18 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS NEVER TRIED TO INFLUENCE MEMBERS OF THE CABINET IN ANY DECISION AT ITS MEETINGS, A CABINET MINISTER SAID TODAY.

WORKS MINISTER DATUK S. SAMY VELLU, IN RELATING WHAT WENT ON AT CABINET MEETINGS WHEN APPROACHED BY REPORTERS AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE HERE, SAID HE REMEMBERED TWO OCCASIONS WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER COULD HAVE DONE SO BUT DID NOT.

THE FIRST OCCASION PERTAINED TO A DEFENCE MINISTRY PAPER PRESENTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF.

IT WAS REJECTED BY THE CABINET AFTER AN OBJECTION FROM A MEMBER, DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID.

THE OTHER WAS ON A WATER SUPPLY STUDY IN THE FEDERAL TERRITORY OF LABUAN CONDUCTED BY THE ECONOMIC PLANNING UNIT (EPU) OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT.

DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID THIS WAS ALSO REJECTED AFTER HE OBJECTED ON THE GROUND THAT THE MATTER WAS NOT UNDER JURISDICTION OF THE PM'S DEPARTMENT BUT THE WORKS MINISTRY'S. -- MORE
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B E206 AAE
SAMY-MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR'S REACTION? +HE JUST GRINNED,+ SAID DATUK SAMY VELLU, WHO DESCRIBED THE PRIME MINISTER AS A GOOD LISTENER.

HE SAID THAT BESIDES LISTENING TO VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CABINET MINISTERS ON MATTERS DISCUSSED, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR EVEN LOOKED INTO COMPLAINTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ABOUT MINISTERS, HOWEVER TRIVIAL IT MIGHT SEEM.

DATUK SAMY VELLU RECALLED HOW HE WAS ASKED TO EXPLAIN TO THE CABINET A COMPLAINT THAT HE HAD INDISCRIMINATELY PARKED HIS CAR AT THE ENTRANCE OF A CLUB.

ACTUALLY, HE SAID, HE HAD JUST PARKED HIS CAR FOR A SHORT WHILE TO DELIVER SOMETHING AND DID NOT REALISE THAT HIS ACTION HAD OFFENDED OTHERS.

+YOU KNOW, THERE WAS EVEN AN ENQUIRY. UNTIL NOW, I AM SACRED TO GO TO THE CLUB,+ HE SAID. -- MORE.
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B E208 AAE
SAMY-MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID THE MEETINGS USUALLY STARTED WITH DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR BRIEFING THE MEMBERS ON LATEST HAPPENINGS IN THE COUNTRY.

THIS +SPONSOR'S MESSAGE+ SOMETIMES LASTED HALF AN HOUR, DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID, BUT HE REMEMBERED THAT AT ONE TIME IT WAS ALMOST TWO HOURS LONG. ONLY THEN WOULD THE CABINET DISCUSS THE MATTERS OF THE DAY.

EVERY MEMBER OF THE CABINET WAS FREE TO EXPRESS HIS OR HER VIEWS ON MATTERS PRESENTED, HE SAID.

+IT'S NOT TRUE THAT WE GO TO THE MEETING AND PLAY DUMB,+ HE SAID.

FOR EXAMPLE, AT TODAY'S MEETING, DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID, THE CABINET CANCELLED TWO TRIPS PLANNED OVERSEAS BECAUSE OF OBJECTIONS BY THE MEMBERS ON THE GROUND THAT +IT WAS A WASTE OF MONEY.+

ON MAJOR PROJECTS LIKE THE PULAU PINANG BRIDGE AND THE PROTON SAGA, DATUK SAMY VELLU SAID THEY WERE CONCEIVED UNDER THE ASSURANCE OF THE +FINANCIAL PILOT+ THEN THAT THE COUNTRY COULD AFFORD THEM.

+HOWEVER, WHEN A NEW +PILOT+ TOOK OVER IN 1984, IT WAS FOUND OUT THAT WE DO HAVE NOT ENOUGH FUEL AND THUS HAVE TO REFILL,+ HE SAID.
-- BERNAMA.
2055MST 18 03 87