

DO88

B E178 AAE
PARLIAMENT-ELECTION
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 18⁸⁷ (BERNAMA) -- THE DEWAN RAKYAT TODAY APPROVED THE MOTION ON THE ELECTION COMMISSION'S REPORT ON A REVISION OF THE ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES OF PARLIAMENTARY AND STATE SEATS IN SARAWAK. (P)

THE REVISION WAS CARRIED OUT FOLLOWING PARLIAMENT'S APPROVAL TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS IN SARAWAK FROM 24 TO 27 AND STATE SEATS FROM 48 TO 56 UNDER THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) ACT 1985 IN OCTOBER 1985.

MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK ABDUL AJIB AHMAD WHEN WINDING UP THE DEBATE SAID THAT, HOWEVER, THE NEW ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES-COULD NOT BE USED FOR THE COMING STATE ELECTION.

THIS WAS BECAUSE THE SARAWAK STATE ASSEMBLY WAS DISSOLVED BEFORE THE MOTION WAS PASSED BY PARLIAMENT AND GAZETTED, HE SAID.

PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, IN TABLING THE MOTION, SAID THAT THE NEW ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES WOULD PAVE THE WAY FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE STATE TO HAVE MORE BALANCED AND EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION. -- MORE

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U E182 AAE
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HE SAID THAT IN DRAWING UP THE NEW ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES THE COMMISSION HAD DONE ITS BEST TO ENSURE THAT THE NUMBER OF VOTERS IN EACH AREA WAS APPROPRIATE.

THE COMMISSION HAD ALSO TO ENSURE THAT EACH ELECTION AREA WAS NOT TOO LARGE TO THE EXTENT OF CREATING DIFFICULTIES FOR THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE TABLING OF THE MOTION WAS NOT LINKED TO THE CURRENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SARAWAK AS IT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR PRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT LONG BEFORE THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE STATE DEVELOPED.

HE SAID THE FACT THAT THE MOTION WAS TABLED AT A TIME WHEN THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS TOOK PLACE WAS MERELY COINCIDENTAL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE DELIMITATION EXERCISE WAS TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION WHICH STIPULATED THAT A REVISION BE CARRIED ONCE EVERY EIGHT YEARS.

IT WAS ALSO DONE BECAUSE OF THE RAPID SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE INCREASE IN THE POPULATION AND NUMBER OF VOTERS IN THE PAST 10 YEARS, HE ADDED. -- MORE

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U E195 AAE
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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SARAWAK STATE ASSEMBLY HAD AMENDED ARTICLE 19(2) OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION ON MAY 18, 1985, TO COORDINATE WITH THE AMENDMENT APPROVED BY PARLIAMENT ON THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY AND STATE SEATS FOR SARAWAK.

ON THE NUMBER OF VOTERS, HE SAID THE TOTAL FOR SARAWAK ACCORDING TO THE ELECTORAL ROLL CONFIRMED IN JANUARY LAST YEAR WAS 607,232.

THIS WAS AN INCREASE OF 47.14 PERCENT OVER THAT OF 1977 WHEN THERE WERE 412,676 VOTERS.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THERE WAS AN AVERAGE OF 22,490 VOTERS IN EACH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY AND 10,843 IN STATE CONSTITUENCY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE COMMISSION HAD DIFFICULTY IN HAVING SIMILAR NUMBER OF VOTERS IN EACH AREA BECAUSE OF GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS AND THE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN THE STATE. -- MORE

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U E200 AAE
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THIS RESULTED IN THE NUMBER OF VOTERS IN CERTAIN RURAL AREAS, ESPECIALLY THE INTERIOR AREAS, TO BE LOWER THAN IT SHOULD BE, HE SAID.

SECONDING THE MOTION, LAND AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER DATUK DR SULAIMAN DAUD SAID THAT THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT IN SARAWAK HAD INCREASED THE PEOPLE'S MEANS OF EARNING A LIVELIHOOD.

HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME, THE CHANNELLING OF THE PEOPLE'S VOICE THROUGH THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN EMPHASIS, HE SAID.

BUT, AT PRESENT THERE WAS SOME DIFFICULTY FOR THE PEOPLE TO SEE THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND VICE VERSA BECAUSE OF THE EXTENSIVE AREA OF THEIR CONSTITUENCIES, HE SAID.

ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN SARAWAK, DATUK DR SULAIMAN SAID THAT THOSE INVOLVED SHOULD BRING UP THEIR GRIEVANCES AT THEIR PARTY'S SUPREME COUNCILS OR COMMITTEES TO BE RESOLVED. -- MORE
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U E201 AAE
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HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENTS HAD AFFECTED THE POLITICAL STABILITY THAT HAD BEEN ENJOYED BY THE PEOPLE ALL THIS WHILE AND THIS WAS WORRYING THEM.

+IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY, THIS COULD BE EASILY EXPLOITED BY IRRESPONSIBLE ELEMENTS TO CREATE UNDESIRABLE INCIDENTS,+ HE ADDED.
-- BERNAMA
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