

TOLL-MAHATHIR

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 8 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BOW TO THREATS AND THE USE OF FORCE BY ANY QUARTER TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE OVER THE COLLECTION OF TOLL IN CHERAS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ENTERTAIN REQUESTS OR APPEALS FROM THE PEOPLE BASED ON WHAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD DO.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PEOPLE WHO DEMONSTRATED AT THE CHERAS TOLL PLAZA LAST NIGHT SHOULD NOT HAVE RESORTED TO SUCH ACTION AND SHOULD NOT HAVE THREATENED NOT TO VOTE FOR THE RULING PARTY IF THE RATE OF TOLL WAS NOT REDUCED.

+THEREFORE, IF THEY DO NOT VOTE FOR THE GOVERNMENT (RULING PARTY), THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY AT ALL OF REDUCING (THE TOLL RATE),+ HE TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AFTER CHAIRING A MEETING OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL, AT THE PARTY HEADQUARTERS HERE. THE MEETING LASTED FOR ABOUT THREE HOURS.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS COMMENTING ON THE DEMONSTRATION BY ABOUT 1,000 PEOPLE AT THE TOLL PLAZA AT KM 8 OF JALAN CHERAS LAST NIGHT WHICH AT ONE STAGE TURNED UNRULY AND FEDERAL RESERVE UNIT (FRU) PERSONNEL HAD TO USE TEAR GAS TO DISPERSE THE CROWD.

THE DEMONSTRATORS HAD PROTESTED AGAINST THE SEPT 1 IMPOSITION OF TOLL, \$1 FOR LIGHT VEHICLES AND \$2 FOR HEAVY VEHICLES, AT KM 5.5 (ONLY SOUTH-BOUND TRAFFIC) AND KM 8 (ONLY CITY-BOUND TRAFFIC) OF JALAN CHERAS. -- MORE
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THE DEMONSTRATORS WERE SAID TO HAVE GATHERED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HIGHWAY AT THE TOLL PLAZA FROM ABOUT 7.30 PM AND THEN BEGAN THROWING BOTTLES AND STONES AT THE POLICE AND THEIR VEHICLES.

POLICE HAD TO FIRE TEAR GAS TO DISPERSE THEM.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID TENSION PREVAILED DURING THE DEMONSTRATION BECAUSE A POLITICAL PARTY WAS INVOLVED IN IT.

HE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD NOT RECEIVED ANY APPEAL FROM THE PEOPLE REGARDING THE RATE OF TOLL IMPOSED THERE.

+THEY HAVE NOT MADE ANY APPEALS ... THEY RESORTED TO DEMONSTRATIONS,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT THE RESIDENTS IN THE AREA HAD RAISED THE MATTER ONLY WITH THE DAP DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL ENCIK LEE LAM THYE. -- MORE
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ASKED WHETHER HE HAD RECEIVED A MEMORANDUM ON THE MATTER FROM THE SUNGAI BESI UMNO DIVISION, HE SAID HE HAD NOT AND ADDED THAT THE UMNO DIVISION WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE DEMONSTRATION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT IF THE RATE OF TOLL WAS REDUCED NOW, THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD SAY THAT IT WAS DONE FOLLOWING THEIR DEMONSTRATIONS.

FOLLOWING THIS, THE OPPOSITION PARTIES WOULD ASK THE RESIDENTS IN THE AREA TO VOTE FOR THEM, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS ON THE RATE OF TOLL, PROVIDED ALL FORMS OF THREATS WERE REMOVED.

HE SAID THE PEOPLE SHOULD ALSO NOT DEMONSTRATE IF THE RATE OF TOLL WAS NOT REDUCED. -- MORE

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AT ANOTHER FUNCTION, DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK SULEIMAN MOHAMED SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT SET THE RATE OF TOLL TO BE IMPOSED ALONG JALAN PAHANG.

HE ADDED HOWEVER THAT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THE RATE WOULD BE 50 SEN.

THE JALAN PAHANG HIGHWAY PROJECT INVOLVED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FLYOVER AND WIDENING OF ROADS AT THE ROUNDABOUT TO EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION. IT IS ALMOST COMPLETE.

EARLIER, DATUK SULEIMAN OPENED AN EXTENSION BUILDING OF THE SEKOLAH AGAMA PUSAT LATIHAN POLIS (PULAPOL), WHICH COST \$14,000. --

BERNAMA

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