

Firm gets \$100,000 a day in lieu of toll

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The Government is paying \$100,000 as compensation to toll operator Syarikat Teratai K. G. Sdn Bhd for each day the toll collection at Jalan Cheras is suspended, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

This was in accordance to an agreement between the Government and the company, he added.

"This means that for 10 days, we carry the burden of having to pay \$1 million. But we are willing to suspend toll collection while discussions are being held

to prevent the use of improper ways (in settling the matter)," he said in reply to questions from reporters.

He had earlier opened the annual general meeting of the Malaysian Federation of Hokkien Associations.

Dr Mahathir said the Government hopes to reach an agreement on ways to settle the problem "as soon as we can".

A committee headed by Works Minister Datuk Leo Moggie was set up on Friday to carry out a compre-

hensive review of the toll collection. A task force was also formed to furnish the committee with information on the situation.

The task force has been directed to submit its recommendations to the committee within 10 days of its formation. The committee will then submit a report to the Cabinet.

Last Wednesday, Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba announced that the Cabinet had suspended toll collection at Jalan Cheras and directed that a review be carried out following

protests from residents in the area.

Toll collection at the interchange began on Sept 1.

The Government, he said, suspended toll collection for the time being to "prevent any unfairness, if there is one".

Datuk Moggie said today the committee would concentrate on a practical formula acceptable to the Government.

He said the committee would also take into consideration the existing agreement between City Hall and Syarikat Teratai

before any recommendations could be made.

"We hope to come up with reasonable ideas, acceptable to all parties concerned. As for now, it is too early to tell since the meeting is still going on," he said after launching the Sarawak Food and Craft Fest at the Parkroyal Hotel.

City Hall has been asked to negotiate new terms with Syarikat Teratai once the Cabinet endorses recommendations made by the committee. Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Elyas Omar is a member of the committee.