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Mahathir - Rulers

From Wan A Hualimi

LONDON, Dec 21 (Bernama) -- The Rulers are not beyond criticism, although it would be seditious to advocate their abolition, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today at the end of a private visit.

That was his understanding of the Sedition Act after taking legal advice, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said, and there was no necessity in the present circumstances to change the law.

Umno, he said, was sending a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Encik Ghafar Baba to explain to the Rulers the feelings expressed during the recent Umno General Assembly.

Expanding on his remarks made when talking to a group of Malaysian students at Malaysia Hall earlier this week, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir emphasised that it was not the intention of Umno to abolish Malaysia's system of constitutional monarchy as it was a good and useful system.

But it was wrong for the Rulers to involve themselves directly in party politics, and it was wrong for them to bring the country into disrepute, he said.

Now that the issue had come out in the open at the Umno General Assembly, it was important to realise that it was not something that would go away quickly, and it was important that the Rulers should take note of it. -- more

♥22/12/00-00MST

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Mahathir - Rulers 2 London

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who was talking to London-based Malaysian journalists at a breakfast meeting, said that while here he had also paid a visit to Downing Street to meet the new British Prime Minister, Encik John Major, to continue Malaysia's good relations with the United Kingdom.

In the meeting, which lasted for nearly an hour, they spoke on topics of mutual interest and on world issues including the Gulf situation.

He had also briefed the British Prime Minister on the situation in Asia, he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that he hoped to meet him again at the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting to appraise the Commonwealth, scheduled for late January.

There had been a proposal to change the date because of the volatile position in the Gulf, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said, but as chairman of the meeting he was of the opinion that it should go on as arranged. -- more

♥22/12/00-02MST

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Mahathir - Rulers 3 London

Asked what changes Malaysia would like to see in the Commonwealth, he said that he would like to see an end to agreement by consensus in the Commonwealth in favour of a majority decision.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who arrived here last Sunday, had also had a meeting with former Prime Minister Puan Margaret Thatcher, who took him on a visit at her flat, which commands a superb view of London's Kensington Garden.

The President of Mitsubishi, Encik N.Nakamura, had also taken the opportunity to fly in from Tokyo to have discussions with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir.

They spoke on a collaboration programme between Mitsubishi and the Heavy Industries Corporation of Malaysia (Hicom), Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

He had also visited vehicle-designing consultant Hawthai Whiting in Essex outside London.

On Thursday, staff of the Malaysian mission in the UK held a 65th birthday party for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir at his residence.

Dr Mahathir went for an early morning jog in the Royal Gardens in the mild winter morning before joining the High Commission staff and journalists for breakfast, before heading for Heathrow Airport to catch the MAS flight home. -- Bernama

♥22/12/00-07MST