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PM SAYS THE EAEC FORMAT WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED

Mahathir-EAEC

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KUALALUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today dismissed the possibility that the format of the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC) will be changed further.

The format, had been changed before but certain parties still said that it was not suitable, he said referring to the change from the East Asia Economic Group to the EAEC.

+We have changed it already. Whatever (changes) made it will still not be suitable (to their views), + he told reporters after launching the national-level Family Day celebrations at Taman Tasik Perdana here.

He was commenting on a report from Seoul quoting a foreign minister from an Asian country that the Malaysia-proposed EAEC might be modified and combined with several other proposals at the Asean Summit in January.

Referring to the action of some parties who tried to tarnish Malaysia's image at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum in Seoul, he said that Malaysia could not do anything about it.

+We cannot do anything (because) they are strong while we are not. We just have to accept it, + he said. -- more

▼16/11/19-57MST

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However, he said that Malaysia would try to proceed to implement the EAEC although there were objections by certain parties.

Meanwhile, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that National Family Day would not be declared a public holiday because it would mean another day when workers lay down tools.

Many developed countries were left far behind due to the philosophy of refusal to work, he added.

He said that however rich a country, it would become bankrupt if it had to bear the burden of feeding a large number of its people as what was happening in several countries which had to fully support 10 per cent of their population.

National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Napsiah Omar, in her speech, said that the government's move to declare National Family Day reflected the government's earnestness in balancing material and spiritual development.

It was also proof that Malaysia placed emphasis on the role of the family in national development, as the United Nations would only declare International Family Day in J. 994. -- more

▼16/11/20-41MST

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She said that appropriate measures should be taken from now to ensure that child-care centres or housemaids had the necessary requirements to bring up children in view of the fact that 52 per cent of women would join the workforce by 2020 compared with 46 per cent in 1990.

The theme +A Caring Family The Basis For Unity+ was selected for this year's celebrations to inculcate the awareness of the community on the importance to promote love and care within the family especially among children, she added.

Datuk Napsiah said that non-governmental organisations and the private sector should also play a role in attaining the government's aspiration to nurture a caring society.

Fourteen families, one from each state and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, received the Family Award 1991.

Also present was his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Alj. -- Bernama

♥16/11/21-17MST