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Mahathir-motion

GOVERNMENT MAY AMEND FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, SAYS PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the government will consider amending the Federal Constitution with the aim of withdrawing the immunity granted to Malay Rulers in respect to criminal prosecution.

He said the move may be taken to ensure that the Ruler: did not abuse their positions and to prevent a recurrence of the Douglas Gomez issue.

+We have to find whatever way we can to ensure this incident (the Gomez issue) does not reccur and I think, towards this end, the immunity granted to the Rulers has to be done away with,+ he said.

The Prime Minister was speaking to reporters at the Parliament House lobby here after attending the debate on the substantive motion on the constitutional monarchy tabled by Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Baba at the Dewan Rakyat sitting today.

He said the debate clearly showed that all parties, including the Opposition, were unhappy over the Gomez issue and wanted action to be taken, chiefly that no-one be given immunity over matters affecting rights of the people. -- more

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He said the outcome of the debate would be discussed at the Umno Supreme Council meeting here tonight, at the Barisan Nasional Supreme Council meeting on Saturday and at next week's Cabinet meeting.

On criminal cases, apart from the Gomez issue, involving the Sultan of Johor brought up by several Members of Parliament (MPs) at today's debate, Dr Mahathir said the government had heard about them but no official reports had been lodged for action to be taken.

+Only this time have the people clearly expressed their dissatisfaction and it is clear that they (the people) are not happy,+ he added.

He said the Gomez case had aroused the sentiments of the people to such an extent that there were no differing opinions in the calls for action to be taken.

He said other criminal cases involving the Sultan of Johor would be referred to the Attorney-General as they involved the police and the law.

On whether the outcome of today's debate would be brought to the attention of the Rulers Council, he said the matter would be studied first.

-- Bernama

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