

A-G may make changes to constitutional amendments

Sun. T. 17 JAN 1993

Rulers still undecided

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The Rulers have deferred their decision on the proposed constitutional amendments pertaining to their immunity to Monday when they will meet for another round of discussions.

The Rulers of Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu, Johor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang and the Regents of Perak and Selangor failed to reach a decision after meeting for about two hours.

The meeting at Istana Negara was later attended by Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad**, his deputy **Abdul Ghafar Baba** and Finance Minister **Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim**.

Attorney-General **Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman** was also present at the palace but he did not attend the meeting.

Speaking to newsmen from inside his car just outside the main entrance to the palace,

Dr Mahathir said he had asked Abu Talib to come up with a solution to the issue after the Rulers failed to arrive at a decision today.

The Prime Minister said he had issued this instruction to Abu Talib after meeting the Rulers for about an hour. Dr Mahathir said that the Rulers had not made a decision at today's meeting and that a Rulers' Conference would be convened on Monday morning when a decision on the constitutional amendments was expected.

The Rulers began their meeting at 10.30am, chaired by the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah was not present.

About noon, Dr Mahathir, Ghafar and Anwar arrived at Istana Negara to hold discussions with the Rulers. They left at 2.10pm. Yesterday, Dr Mahathir had said he and the

ON PAGE 2

PAHANG SULTAN SPENDS RM4,000 DAILY ON HORSES

IGP: PAY HEED TO THE LAW

GROUPS BACK Dr M's STAND

Menteris Besar had been informed not to attend the conference.

Asked to comment on the developments pertaining to the amendments, Abu Talib told reporters that he needed time to study some of the proposed amendments.

Pressed to elaborate, Abu Talib indicated that some changes might be made to the proposed amendments. He however, declined to discuss specifics.

Also speaking from inside his car, the Attorney-General said: "It is possible ... give me time to study and consider. It's too early to comment. I will try to find a solution to overcome the problem."

"I did not participate in the meeting and I do not know what transpired."

Asked whether the scheduled two-day special Dewan Rakyat meeting, which begins on Monday, would be affected, he said: "We will wait until Monday."

Meanwhile, Anwar said he was confident that a solution would be found.

He said the meeting was conducted in a very cordial manner and expressed confidence that there was a very good possibility that a decision would be reached before Monday.

"The final decision will be announced on Monday after the Rulers' Conference."

Today's meeting attracted a big group of reporters and photographers, including representatives from the British Broadcasting Corporation. Newsmen had gathered as early as 8am outside the palace to await the Rulers' arrival.

The Regent of Selangor was the first to arrive at 9.30am followed by the Sultan of Terengganu at 9.50am and the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan two minutes later.

They were followed by the Sultan of Kedah, Sultan of Kelantan, Raja of Perlis, Sultan of Johor and the Sultan of Pahang. By 10.15am all the Rulers had arrived.

The Negri Ruler left Istana Negara at 1.30pm followed by the Raja of Perlis, Sultan of Kedah, Sultan of Kelantan, Sultan of Terengganu, Sultan of Johor and the Regent of Selangor.

The Sultan of Pahang left

half-an-hour later followed by Dr Mahathir, Ghafar and Anwar.

Only photographers from Bernama, the Information Department, RTM and TV3 were allowed into the istana to take pictures of the proceedings.

Earlier at the Prime Minister's Department, Dr Mahathir, Ghafar and Anwar met the Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers for about an hour.

Bernama, reporting from Malacca, later quoted Ghafar as saying that today's meeting showed signs of an amicable settlement.

"We were worried and felt a bit awkward when they said earlier that the Prime Minister and Menteris Besar would not be invited to today's meeting."

"But when the Rulers wanted to meet the Prime Minister, we could sense something good coming."