

aae tbe

Rptn, replacing "tank" with "all-terrain armoured personnel fighting vehicles" in fourth para.

Mahathir-Australia

KEATING CAN VISIT M'SIA, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

bm

PEKAN, Nov 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today his Australian counterpart Paul Keating can visit Malaysia if he wants to.

It was left to Keating to decide whether he wanted to make the visit, he told reporters when asked about Australian press reports that Keating, who had been criticised for calling Dr Mahathir a recalcitrant, was scheduled to visit Malaysia next year.

"It is up to him. We'll look at the situation," he said when asked whether Keating would be welcome here.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir launched and test-drove the DRB Pinzgauer all-terrain armoured personnel fighting vehicles at the Peramu Jaya Industrial Zone here before handing it over to Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Dr Mahathir gave the assurance that Keating would not face a negative reception when in Malaysia, such as being splashed with paint. -- more

JO MGN

end of rptn

▼25/11/18-38MST

CNS0410

U GE 25-11 00163 EG394

aae tbe

Mahathir-Australia 2 Pekan

"When (the late prime minister) Tun Razak went there (to Australia), people hurled paint and did a lot of things to him, but we did not say anything," he said.

On a call by Umno Youth for the government to review bilateral relations if Australia did not apologize and explain Keating's outburst, Dr Mahathir said the government would have to study the matter.

He said he would not be able to say at this time the pros and cons of the government taking such a decision.

"This is the view of Umno Youth which is a part of Umno which forms the government," he said, adding that the view of Umno Youth must be considered.

Yesterday, Umno Youth sent a protest note to Australian High Commissioner John Dauth demanding that Keating tender an open apology to Dr Mahathir in a week. -- more

JO MGN

▼25/11/18-46MST

CNS0418

U GE 25-11 00067 EG395

aae tbe

Mahathir-Australia 3 (last) Pekan

Furthermore, it wanted Australia to explain the incident and give an assurance that it would not be repeated.

The movement also convened an extraordinary meeting of its executive council at Parliament House to discuss the matter. The meeting was chaired by the movement's vice-leader, Datuk Nazri Aziz. -- Bernama

JO MGN

▼25/11/18-49MST