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Mahathir-Singapore

SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA REUNION, JUST A WARNING TO SINGAPOREANS

KOTA KINABALU, Aug 31 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the recent proposal by a Singapore senior minister on a possibility of a reunion with Malaysia was just a warning to its people for the need to work hard.

"The way it was couched or said, it appears to me...I may be wrong of course, it is a warning to Singaporeans if they do not work hard and probably support certain political parties, then Singapore might not develop that fast and at that stage, they may have to join Malaysia at Malaysia's terms," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on Singapore's reunion proposal at a news conference at the old terminal of the Kota Kinabalu International Airport near here today. Earlier he witnessed the 39th National Day parade at the Likas Sports Complex near here.

Recently, senior minister Lee Kuan Yew painted a scenario under which Singapore may rejoin Malaysia if certain conditions are right for it to do so. The conditions include Malaysia adopting the same policy of meritocracy as Singapore, without any race being in a privileged position.

Lee, 72, was prime minister of Singapore from 1959 to 1990. Singapore became part of the Federation of Malaysia in 1963 together with Sabah, and Sarawak but split in 1965.

"I am quite sure Singaporeans do not want that. So if they do not want that, I think the idea is you make sure that it does not happen. You must make sure it does not happen. Not that this will happen. You must make sure it does not happen and will not happen if Singapore does well," Dr Mahathir said.

He said when he tried to analyse the proposal of the reunion, it is not exactly that Singapore wants to rejoin Malaysia. "It is not that at all."

"If we (Singapore) fail, we join Malaysia," he said, could be the attitude.

Dr Mahathir, however, said Malaysia only liked successful people to join her. "We do not want failures," he added.

Asked if the proposal was to give Singaporeans a jolt, Dr Mahathir said: "That is right. That is right. It is to give them a bit of electric shock. If you do not behave yourself...you know." -- BERNAMA

JSM RM