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BN leaders to meet over Congressmen's resolution

JOHOR BARU, Sat. - Barisan Nasional leaders will meet on Tuesday to register the coalition party's stand on the draft resolution of the 34 US Congressmen demanding a public apology from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad over his alleged "anti-American and anti-Semitic" remarks.

BN secretary general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said the meeting was also for component parties to pledge their undivided support for the leadership of Dr Mahathir as the Prime Minister and BN chairman.

"We feel that the act of the US Congressmen demanding a public apology or a resignation by the Prime Minister as something which is uncalled for.

"It is a serious issue which involves the sovereignty of the country and interference in our politics," Mohamed told reporters at the Pulai Umno building today.

He said the special BN meeting would be held at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur at 10am.

Mohamed said a special motion would be tabled by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in Parliament on Wednesday in support of Dr Mahathir, adding that it was time for Malaysian MPs to voice their stand.

He said the action of the 34 US Congressmen could invoke anger and hatred among Malaysians towards the US and its people, adding that the Congressmen should be held responsible if this happened.

Describing the existing relationship between the two countries as cordial, Mohamed said it was the intention of Malaysia to maintain the friendly ties for mutual interest.

In Kuantan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob said a motion supporting Dr Mahathir's leadership will be tabled at the Budget sitting of the Pahang Legislative Assembly beginning Monday. He said Pahang is expected to become the first State to move such a motion.

Khalil said today the resolution was to demonstrate the State Government and the public's support in facing the resolution by 34 United States Congressmen urging Dr Mahathir to apologise or resign from his post as Prime Minister for his alleged "inflammatory" anti-American and anti-Jewish remarks.

"The motion is to tell the world, especially the Congressmen, that all Malaysians are behind Dr Mahathir," he said.

Khalil said this to reporters after launching the RM1.3 billion Bandar Damansara Kuantan, located at the Jalan Gambang-Pelabuhan Kuantan today.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Fauzi Abdul Rahman, said Malaysia was the only Islamic country in the world that allowed university students from Israel to visit our country and also invite Israeli cricket players to participate in the cricket tournament held here.

"Our Prime Minister who is also the Home Minister took a great risk by allowing them to come to Malaysia," said Fauzi, who described the US congressmen as practising "perverted democracy" because they were ignorant of the Malaysian scenario.

He added that during the launch of a recent foreign investment exhibition, participating American businessmen had also expressed their dissatisfaction on the sanction by the 34 US congressmen.

In Kota Kinabalu, the Sabah State Umno Liaison Committee today criticised the the move by the 34 United States Congressmen.

Its chief Datuk Osu Sukam said Sabah Umno saw the draft Congressional resolution and letter by the Congressmen to the Prime Minister as an effort to meddle with the internal affairs of a sovereign country.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the committee meeting, Osu said it was clear that the US was uneasy with leaders who dared to speak their minds.

In Kuala Lumpur, the Gerakan Cinta Malaysia submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister's office pledging its full support to the Government and Dr Mahathir's leadership.

Its president Lim Guan Teik said in the memorandum that the movement would mobilise its resources to organise activities aimed at instilling a sense of patriotism among Malaysians.

Meanwhile Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, said the party's proposal for a delegation from the Barisan Nasional to meet United States Congressmen is aimed at removing any misconception behind the draft resolution against the Prime Minister.

The New Straits Times yesterday reported that Gerakan would submit the proposal to the BN Supreme Council on Tuesday for discussion.

Dr Lim said the congressmen had their own agenda in coming out with first a letter and then a draft resolution demanding that Dr Mahathir apologise or resign for his purported anti-American and anti-semitic remarks.

"It seems that some politicians are using this issue for their own mileage and political agenda," he said after opening the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats general assembly and its forum on "Governance of Multi-ethnic Societies in Asia".

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