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Assembly-DAP (Pulau Pinang)

BN REGRETS DAP WALK-OUT ON SUPPORT-MAHATHIR MOTION

PULAU PINANG, Nov 27 (Bernama) -- A government backbencher today hit out at the lone opposition member in the Pulau Pinang State Legislative Assembly when it took a vote on a motion of confidence in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's leadership.

Dr Teng Hock Nan (BN-Kebun Bunga) said the action by the lone DAP member Chong Eng (DAP-Batu Lanchang) showed that the DAP would not rally to the nation's help in a critical hour.

The motion was tabled by Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

"We know now that we cannot count on the DAP for support to help the nation when the leadership is facing crisis," he said to the applause of Barisan Nasional (BN) members in the House.

Debating the state's 1998 Budget, Teng said he was also disappointed with Chong Eng's statement that the BN had over reacted when it tabled the motion in response to a draft resolution by 34 United States congressmen demanding Dr Mahathir to apologise or resign over his allegedly anti-Jewish statement.

Dr Mahathir had repeatedly clarified that his statement had been misinterpreted and that he is not anti-Jew.

Teng said even if just one U S congressman made the statement, the BN and the people should act likewise, since the draft resolution was against national integrity and sovereignty.

Also debating the state budget, Datuk Ahmad Saad (BN-Permatang Pasir) said public complaints of unresolved problems since last month's Sungai Bakap state by-election were warning signals to the state government to be more efficient and effective.

The state government should prove that it was action-oriented by giving more attention to the agriculture sector to help reduce food imports, Ahmad said.

He said of the RM4 million allocated for agriculture in the state's 1998 budget, only RM1.4 million was for actual agricultural activities while the rest, for construction of buildings in that sector.

The government, he said, should also encourage the people to grow their own vegetables and take stern actions against idle land owners.

Syed Amiruddin Syed Ahmad (BN-Teluk Kumbar) urged the state government not to let the under-utilised Pulau Pinang International Sports Arena in Relau be a white elephant.

Hilmi Abdul Rashid (BN-Bertam) urged the state government to develop bio-technology and bio-diversification research for the agriculture sector.

Farmers in the state could save a lot of money if they could produce their own fertilizers and insecticides through such research, he added. --

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