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Call to check rates hike by privatised projects

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The Government should find ways to re-negotiate agreements reached with concession holders of privatised projects in view of escalating living costs.

Parti Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today efforts should be made to bring escalating service rates down to a more acceptable level.

Speaking at a Press conference after closing the two-day 26th Gerakan annual delegates conference, he said:

"We will gather opinions expressed by the delegates, after which I will bring up the issue in the Cabinet or submit a memorandum to the Government."

Dr Lim was commenting on resolutions passed by the party, which among others, took to task the concession holders for price hikes.

Touching on the recent attack on the Malaysian currency, he said the country should increase its export while reducing imports of "bulky and expensive products."

"The people should insist on buying locally-made goods as paying a high price does not mean high quality."

"The private sector, on the other hand, should also check on their imported materials, and if possible, use our own products," said Dr Lim, who is also the Primary Industries Minister.

On amendment to the party's constitution, he said the party's Central Committee would study the feasibility of allowing only members of two years or more to contest in party election.

"But if there is a potential candidate, we will certainly back him up by getting the party's Central Working Committee to provide him with a written permission to contest.

"We feel this is necessary to curb negative development such as infighting," he said.

Other aspects of the party's resolutions included:

- * greater co-operation with Barisan Nasional component parties at all levels.

- * support for the Government's actions to stamp out corruption, both in the public and private sectors.

- * urging Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to reform the Kuala Lumpur City Hall by appointing councillors from among BN component parties and representatives of professional bodies.

- * support the setting up of the Multimedia Super Corridor and Cyberjaya.

- * urging party leaders, the Pemuda and Wanita wings, as well as non-governmental organisations to plan programmes aimed at combating social ills.

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