

04 AUG 1997

Mahathir-remarks

MAHATHIR:NAWAZ DID NOT REMARK ON LITTERBUGS

LANGKAWI, Aug 4 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that his Pakistani counterpart, Nawaz Sharif did not make any remark about the rubbish along Jalan Bukit Bintang in Kuala Lumpur as reported by the media.

While clarifying the matter, Dr Mahathir said:"I did not say Nawaz said that it was dirty. He did not say it".

Commenting on today's news reports that Nawaz had remarked so, Dr Mahathir said Nawaz only made remarks about Kuala Lumpur's cleanliness.

Speaking to reporters after opening the five day 1997 Langkawi Oshkosh East Fly-In Convention and Exhibition here, Dr Mahathir repeatedly said Nawaz did not say that the city was dirty.

Dr Mahathir said:" Nawaz went to Lot 10 and I do not know whether he saw (the rubbish) or not but (Datuk) Tajol (Rosli Ghazali) who accompanied him (Nawaz) while walking from Lot 10 back to Regent Hotel saw how dirty was the street and Tajol told me that Nawaz must have seen how dirty it is".

Tajol Rosli was minister-in-attendance during Nawaz's four-day official visit to Malaysia. Nawaz returned home yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said: "I don't know how I can ever get this thing clear. Every time I said something, it came out something else".

The reports quoted the prime minister as saying that he was ashamed of the bad habits of litterbugs, who dirtied the city and marred the country's image.

Dr Mahathir reportedly had called for stern action against the litterbugs.

On the haze situation, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was not blaming anybody, especially Indonesia, for the haze that has enveloped the region.

The Prime Minister said:"I think what happens when there is haze this year, we did not make the move to contact Indonesia to find out what can be done".

He said that it was not Indonesia's fault because "we never informed them."

The prime minister said something needed to be done to deal with the haze this time around.

"We will have to find ways.. something like leaving water bomb or whatever that can be used," Dr Mahathir said.

Dr Mahathir said a mechanism for dealing with haze had already been discussed but it needed to be activated.

The prime minister also responded to international criticisms of the proposed third international airport for the peninsular northern region to be built in Kuala Muda Kedah.

The project would be implemented as planned in Kuala Muda, Kedah, said Dr Mahathir commenting on a report critical of the project in an international news magazine.

Presently the region is served by the international airports at Langkawi and Pulau Pinang.

He said several major projects have been implemented all the same despite expressed doubts by foreigners that Malaysia could not get them off the drawing board.

"Had we listened to international views, today we'll not be tapping rubber, we'll not industrialise. we can't do this, can't do that. We'll not

have people working in factories. Only they seem to know what's best for us," he said.

"We'll do it. We'll see whether it can be done or not", he said.

Earlier, in his speech, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was keen to have an aircraft industry of her own and produce passenger aircraft in future.

"To make it a reality, we have to stimulate the interest among Malaysians in the industry and understanding of the art and science of flying light aircraft and their maintenance, design and manufacturing", he said.

Dr Mahathir said this step could lead to investments in aircraft manufacturing, components production, materials and engineering.

He said Malaysians interested in flying should develop a special culture focusing on being very careful on how to build an aircraft, maintain and fly it properly.

"The idea is not only to stimulate interest in flying but beyond that we want to stimulate an understanding how aircraft fly, how it is designed, air-control and etc." he said.

Malaysians have to learn all these so as not to left behind, he said.

Dr Mahathir then witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MYHH Hobby Centre Sdn Bhd and O.K Model Company of Osaka, Japan to develop aero-modelling in Kedah.

MYHH was represented by its managing director Mohamad Yusof Hassan and O.K, its vice president Tom Takamatsu.-- Bernama

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