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Assembly-Motion (Pulau Pinang)

PULAU PINANG ASSEMBLY PASSES MOTION SUPPORTING PM

PULAU PINANG, Nov 24 (Bernama) -- The Pulau Pinang State Legislative Assembly today passed a motion of support for the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The motion, tabled by Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and supported by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Mohd Shariff Omar, was widely debated by the assemblymen, including the lone DAP representative, Chong Eng who only supported part of the five-point motion.

The motion calls on all concerned to:

- * Give full confidence and full support for the leadership of Dr Mahathir as the Prime Minister and the national leadership in efforts to deal with present economic challenges and to fight any attempt at undermining the nation's sovereignty and leadership.

- * Uphold and advance the democratic principles and the practice of consensus as well as goodwill among Malaysia's diverse community, as a sovereign and independent nation.

- * To strongly oppose any attempt at interfering with Malaysian domestic affairs by several Members of the United States Congress by usurping the rights of Malaysians in deciding their leadership through the democratic process.

- * Maintain continuous efforts at enhancing the good bilateral relations between Malaysians in Pulau Pinang and the peoples of other nations, including the US, in the economic, social, cultural and education

- * Urge the Pulau Pinang people to rally for greater solidarity behind the leadership to ensure peace and stability, enhance economic productivity and quality living as well as uphold the noble values of religion and tradition.

Chong said the DAP's stand was clear in the issue, as conveyed in the motion and the party only supported matters relating to the protest against foreign interference in Malaysia's internal affairs.

She said the motion moved by the Chief Minister had "mixed up" all sorts of issues with the motive of getting political mileage for the Barisan National.

When Speaker Datuk Yahaya Abdul Hamid called for the vote to be taken on the motion, Chong Eng left the house.

Koh in tabling the motion said the people would have to show their solidarity to give undivided support for Dr Mahathir as his 16 years of leadership excellence had brought progress to the nation.

He said the Prime Minister had brought many new ideas to the administration, like the Malaysia incorporated concept, the look-East policy, and the efficient, clean and trustworthy leadership.

The motion was not intended as an attack on the Americans or the US government and the state government would continue to welcome American investments and tourists to the state.

In debating the motion, Datuk Dr Sak Cheng Lum (BN-Bagan Jermal) said it was appropriate and timely for the motion to be tabled, but he regretted that Chong did not support it fully.

Dr K. Rajapathy (BN- Perai), the state MIC chairman, said Dr Mahathir did not practise racialism as he had untiringly worked for multi-racial cooperation and unity.

He said the claim made against Dr Mahathir that he was anti-Jews was incorrect, as he had recently allowed the Israeli cricket team to come to

Malaysia despite protests by PAS.

Datuk Ahmad Saad (BN-Permatang Pasir), also chairman of the State Backbenchers' Club, said all its members were in full support of the Prime Minister and whatever action he was taking on the national economy, as a result of speculative attacks by US financier George Soros.

"The action by the US congressmen was probably to restrict Malaysia, particularly the Prime Minister, for showing his sincerity in voicing out against certain world issues which had become another form of domination of the third world nations," he added.

During question time, Mohd Shariff urged local housing developers to increase from the present five to 10 percent the discount rate for Bumiputeras to enable them purchase and own houses in the state.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the state government would hold further discussion with developers to help the Bumiputera to fill the offered quota in housing projects.

He said developers in other states had done this and he hoped the government agencies in the state would be the first to introduce the new quota early next year.

Responding to an oral question from Jasmin Mohamed (BN-Sungai Dua) he said besides helping the Bumiputeras, the state government was also considering ways of helping the Bumiputeras, especially the poor, maintain their property.

This would include the prohibition of ownership transfer of such properties to the other races to be made a conditional housing sale and purchase requirement.

Replying to Chong Eng (DAP-Batu Lanchang) if the intended 10 percent discount could be given to the non-Bumiputera poor, Shariff said the issue only involved Bumiputeras.

He also said the low-cost house quota was 45 per cent each for Bumiputeras and Chinese and 10 per cent for Indians.

Chong then asked the government to device a housing policy without focussing only on one particular racial group, but for all races to have the home ownership opportunity.

Earlier, State Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment Committee Chairman Datuk Abdul Rashid Abdullah said the Department of Environment (DOE) conducted tests on the river waters of Sungai Perai, Sungai Juru, Sungai Jawi and Sungai Pinang at least thrice a year.

He said except for Sungai Pinang the waters of the other rivers had been seriously polluted with waste matter and discharges from pig farms, factories and commercial and residential areas.

He said the state government would take action to remove the effluents in Sungai Juru and the planned project to beautify the a 5.3km stretch of the river banks would also prevent its pollution.

The state government would be working with a Danish consultant firm to ensure a "zero-discharge" method of the pig farm management to minimise the river pollution, he added. -- BERNAMA

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