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Lim

AH LEK LEAVING IT TO PM AND GOH TO SETTLE CPF ISSUE

SEREMBAN, Aug 11 (Bernama) -- The Human Resources Ministry is leaving it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his Singapore counterpart Goh Chok Tong to settle a Malaysia-Singapore dispute over withdrawal of contributions from the republic's Central Provident Fund (CPF).

The minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek said he had written to his Singapore counterpart Dr Lee Boon Yang on the matter and Lee had responded.

Lim did not elaborate on this.

"It's up to the top level now and I hope Singapore will be sympathetic to the affected workers because this money belongs to them, so I hope they will look at this issue positively," Lim said.

He was responding to reporters' queries on the latest development on the CPF issue when approached after opening a Negeri Sembilan Wushu and Lion Dance competition here last night.

According to Lim, the CPF to date holds more than S\$1 billion in contributions by Malaysian workers in Singapore.

Lim said; "I'm sure this issue will be raised by our prime minister with Singapore prime minister Goh Chok Tong. But how the response is up to Singapore...it is not up to us. We are making an appeal because we feel that they should not discriminate."

He questioned why Malaysian workers from Sabah and Sarawak could withdraw their CPF contributions, but not those from peninsular Malaysia, upon ceasing employment in the republic.

The CPF rules that peninsular Malaysians no longer employed in Singapore could only withdraw their CPF contributions upon reaching 55.

"I am sure Singapore will be able to consider our appeal. The money does not belong to the government neither it belong to the Singapore government, it belongs to our workers," Lim added.

-- BERNAMA

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