

21/04/1998

Dr M on sensitivities in graves relocation

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it is no longer suitable to have burial grounds in the middle of the city, but the relocation of cemeteries must be done without affecting the sensitivities of the next-of-kin.

The Prime Minister said no problems should arise from the relocation exercise and those responsible in carrying out the task should adhere to customs and religious requirements.

He said this when asked to elaborate on his speech earlier that there was a need to safeguard the sensitivities of the next-of-kin when carrying out the relocation of the burial ground at the Hokkien Cemetery in Jalan Sungei Besi/Jalan Loke Yew.

Dr Mahathir had earlier witnessed the signing of the agreement between Pribena Construction Sdn Bhd and Selangor Hokkien Association to relocate the graves to a new site in Mukim Hulu Semenyih, Hulu Langat.

Also present were Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Kamaruzzaman Shariff.

Asked about the dissatisfaction of certain quarters in Semenyih over the move, Dr Mahathir said the Government could not please everyone.

He added that there were people who were not happy with the Government's decisions to build roads or mosques.

"If we have to make everyone happy, then nothing can be done."

Earlier in his speech, the Prime Minister said it was not easy to reach an agreement because no community will be keen to relocate its burial ground to other sites.

"But the association, taking into account national interest, gives its consent to the relocation."

He said the new site would make it easier for the next-of-kin to pay their respects to the deceased, particularly during All Souls' Day.

"It would be difficult for them to visit the burial grounds in the middle of the city."

The Prime Minister also reminded Pribena to carry out the relocation smoothly.

"While we want to see the present burial ground being developed, the relocation of the graves must be done without disappointing the next-of-kin."

He added said the Government and City Hall would extend their co-operation in the exercise.

The Prime Minister was also asked to comment on his statement yesterday calling on brokerage firms to merge.

"It is up to them whether they (brokerage firms) want to merge with their parent banks. But we don't want to cause problems because the brokerage firms have their role to play."

Dr Mahathir said some might not be able to merge.

"We are not forcing them to do so. We do not want to cause unemployment."

"If they merge, it must not be done in an unthinkable fashion that can create problems."

(END)