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Govt to form 1 body to collect donations

THE Government will consolidate all bodies collecting public donations to expand the national reserves into a single body to prevent mismanagement.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that while the Government welcomes moves to increase the country's reserves, it wants this to be carried out by a proper body.

"We can't have too many bodies collecting donations ... These are valuable things in the form of monies, jewellery or even property. We have to take it and translate it into national wealth.

"This has to be done by a proper body. I will take this up with the Cabinet tomorrow (Wednesday)," he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur yesterday after witnessing an agreement-signing ceremony between Telekom Malaysia and MEPS Joint Venture on the construction of the Multimedia University.

Dr Mahathir said he is gratified that there are so many people wanting to donate and assist the Government in building up further the national reserves.

"But I will have to seek the Cabinet's approval on the formation of the donation-collecting body. It must be competent to accept donations," he added.

Public donations to assist the Government in expanding the national reserves started when the idea was first raised during an interview with Dr Mahathir on a local network's morning show last month.

Asked whether such a move would reflect that the country's reserves were shrinking, Dr Mahathir said it is not a question of whether the reserves were being depleted.

"The bigger the reserves, the better. That is all there is ... every country needs to build up its reserves in order to protect itself.

"The stronger we are, the less prone we are to being attacked by others. Do not jump to the conclusion that we are already poor (due to these donation activities)," he said.

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