

05/07/1998

Kit Siang supports PM on CPF withdrawals

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Opposition leader Lim Kit Siang today came out in support of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that the Singapore Central Provident Fund should allow all Malaysians to withdraw their contributions when they quit their jobs and leave the republic.

Lim who is also DAP secretary-general said the current practice of permitting only Malaysians from Sabah and Sarawak to withdraw their savings "is clearly discriminating and dividing Malaysians into two different categories."

"It is time the Singapore Government acknowledged that such discriminatory treatment of Malaysians from the peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak, though a result of historic links, is now completely untenable," he said in a Press statement.

An estimated 50,000 Malaysians are CPF members with total savings of about S\$1 billion (RM2.5 billion).

At present, CPF allows workers of other nationalities and Malaysians from Sabah and Sarawak to withdraw their savings when they quit their job and leave Singapore.

However, those from the peninsula can make full withdrawals only when they reach 55 years and leave Singapore permanently. Alternatively, they must be above 50 years old and have stopped working in Singapore for two years before applying.

"I hope that the Singapore Cabinet at its meeting next week will make a policy decision and announce that Malaysians from the peninsula will be treated like Malaysians from Sabah and Sarawak, and be allowed to withdraw their CPF savings when they quit their jobs and leave Singapore.

"This will also be a great gesture of good neighbourliness as Malaysia is in dire need of the RM2.5 billion savings of its citizens in view of the economic problems faced by the country," he added.

(END)