

08/12/1998

Syed Hamid: PM's call for maintenance culture a reminder

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Defence Ministry will look into Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent comments that government property, including aircraft and ships, is in a sorry state.

This followed a recent directive during the weekly Cabinet meeting by Dr Mahathir to the Ministry to instil the culture of maintenance in the Royal Malaysian Navy.

Speaking to reporters today, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the Ministry accepted the comment positively as a reminder to improve efficiency in the daily running of the armed forces, especially during the current economic situation.

He said: "The main intention of the Prime Minister's comment was to get Malaysians to inculcate the habit of maintenance. This comment was not targeted solely at the Defence Ministry but also other government agencies.

"We welcome the comment as we cannot afford to have accidents due to lack of maintenance, especially in our effort to save cost and prolong the lifespan of the assets.

"However, if a crash does occur, it does not mean that there is a lack of maintenance procedures. Both human and technical errors must be taken into account. Even technical errors are not necessarily due to bad maintenance," he added.

He said this when asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's statement early this month, advising Malaysians to adopt "the culture of maintenance" in their lifestyles so that properties remained in good condition.

Dr Mahathir said that he had observed that Malaysians lacked the culture of maintenance which resulted in properties, including government buildings, aircraft and ships being in a sorry state.

Syed Hamid said that the armed forces had a set of rules and regulations pertaining to the maintenance of assets and action would be taken if those entrusted with the job failed to do so.

He added: "In order to enhance the standard of maintenance, the Treasury must ensure sufficient funds are allocated. Insufficient or reduced reduced funding could affect the maintenance culture."

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