

26 JUL 1999

Parliament-Motion

NO EVIDENCE PM INVOLVED IN PERWAJA CASE, DEWAN RAKYAT TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, July 26 (Bernama) -- Investigation by the Anti Corruption Agency (ACA) into the Perwaja case does not show any evidence of the involvement of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Dewan Rakyat was told today.

"The ACA investigation so far does not show the involvement of Dr Mahathir in the Perwaja case," said Deputy Dewan Rakyat Speaker Datuk Ong Tee Keat when rejecting a motion by opposition leader Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Tanjong).

Lim tabled a motion under Rule 18(2) of the Dewan Rakyat standing order for proceedings of the house be adjourned to discuss the issue of the losses incurred by Perwaja following a police report by former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, which he described as opening a new dimension to the case.

Ong said that he had studied the motion and found that even though the issue was specific and of public interest, it was not urgent.

He said that the police report said to have been lodged by Anwar was dated July 21, 1999, 15 days ago, and it was still too early for the body concerned to take action.

"I understand that appropriate action will be taken on the report," he said.

Ong said that he was informed that the ACA had conducted an investigation but it still could not ascertain whether or not payment made by the Perwaja management was against the law.

He said that the ACA was making attempts to interview several witnesses abroad besides trying to overcome several technical problems.

Lim said that in the police report lodged by Anwar at the Tun H.S. Lee police station on July 21, he had implicated Dr Mahathir in the problem faced by Perwaja which incurred losses totalling RM2.986 billion and liabilities of RM6.939 billion as at the end of 1995.

Lim called for the setting up of a royal commission to look into the case to clear the prime minister's name and to ensure that the case would not become one where there was "a serious case without the criminal".

-- BERNAMA

AKT RM