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Opposition MPs keep Deputy Speaker busy with their childish antics

BLAMED it on ignorance or simply to gain political mileage. The attitude of Pas and DAP MPs in Parliament is no different from that of a child trying to attract attention.

Even when the Speaker ordered them to sit, they still continued to argued with him and disregarded his order.

Again and again they raised issues irrelevant to the debate and when the Minister rebutted these accusations and proved them baseless, they raised other issues.

Teresa Kok Suh Sim (DAP-Seputeh) was repeatedly asked by Deputy Speaker Datuk Mohamad Abdullah to sit as he said the points in her speech on the Supplementary Supply (1999) (No.2) 1999 Bill were irrelevant.

Defying the order, Kok argued that her points on East Timor was relevant according to her interpretation of the Order Paper on the additional allocation requested by the Foreign Ministry.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar replied that Kok could only touch on specific matters as the allocations were meant for embassies in Sudan and Yemen.

A row also erupted between Syed Hamid and Pas Youth chief Mahfuz Omar over government policies on Israel.

Syed Hamid had said Malaysia's stand was very clear that it would not have any relations with Israel.

Mahfuz Omar (Pas-Pokok Sena) stood to seek clarification from Syed Hamid, asking if Malaysia's emphasis on economic and bilateral ties with other countries would include Israel.

Mahfuz claimed International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz had mentioned that the Government would not stop Malaysian traders from having trade relations with their counterparts from Israel.

"Does this mean the Malaysian Government will have ties with Israel?" Syed Hamid replied that Malaysia would not have any ties with Israel.

Dissatisfied with the answer, Mahfuz again asked the same question to which Syed Hamid replied that Malaysia would not enter into any relations with Israel.

"I have given the Government's stand on this matter. If you have different opinion on this, that is up to you. But, Malaysia will not and will never have any bilateral relations with Israel."

Mahfuz continued heckling Syed Hamid, saying the opinion was different from Rafidah's.

Then, Syed Hamid showed a letter purportedly written by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and alleged that letter was written by Pas.

Mahfuz then stood and said that under the point of order an MP must not have a bad intention towards another. His comment was made amidst loud noises from backbenchers but Mahfuz, ignoring Mohamad's order to sit, shouted that he had proved Dr Mahathir had met Barak.

Mohamad then asked Syed Hamid to proceed. This did not go down well with Mahfuz and he stood again, asking for a clarification.

"The letter was said to be written by Dr Mahathir but then it had a fake letterhead of the PM's Department. Even the address was wrong. This letter was distributed during the election campaign period in mosques and surau," Syed Hamid said.

He said he had no reason to stop meeting Ministers, even from Israel, as

the Prophet himself had met with Israeli leaders for peace agreements.

"We do not deny that we met them and we have no reason to keep this matter secret. But the meeting was to tell them our stand and to send a strong message that we will not recognise Israel".

Husam Musa (Pas-Kubang Kerian) then challenged Syed Hamid to make the accusation outside the House.

Syed Hamid said he felt the matter should only be discussed in Parliament as the Opposition had raised it in their debate.

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