

17/01/1999

Pomelo growers seek Dr M's help

IPOH, Sat. - The Federation of Chinese Assembly Halls in Malaysia will submit a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad asking for help to overcome the problem faced by some 300 pomelo growers in Tambun and Ampang here who have been issued notice to vacate.

President Datuk Chong Chin Shoong said today the federation would seek the help of the Prime Minister as the pomelo growers had exhausted all available avenues to find a solution.

"We will get an appointment to hand over the memorandum to Dr Mahathir as soon as possible," he told the Press at the Perak Chinese Assembly Hall.

Earlier he received the memorandum from Pomelo Growers' Association chairman Chow Sun which outlined the problems and the possibility of about 1,000 workers being deprived of their livelihood should the 140ha, comprising several farms in the two areas, have to make way for development.

Chong said the farms generated an annual income of about RM3 million.

"The fruit has also brought fame to Perak and the demise of the farms will be a sad episode," he said.

Chow told reporters the farms had been there for the last 30 to 40 years and the farmers had developed indigenous technology to produce quality pomeloes.

"Even farmers from other states have visited our farms to learn how to cultivate quality fruits with sweet taste," he said.

He said the soil in Tambun and Ampang was the best to grow the fruit.

Chow said the farmers had been making numerous applications to get permanent land titles or temporary occupation licences over the last 10 years but were unsuccessful.

"Now a company which has been alienated a big parcel of land in the two areas has been issuing notices to us to vacate."

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