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NGO-Fund

PUT PERSONAL FEELINGS ASIDE, NGOS TELL COUNTERPARTS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 20 (Bernama) -- Leaders of two influential Indian-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) today appealed to their counterparts to put aside personal feelings and to reconsider their opposition to the dissolution of the South Indian Labour Fund.

Malaysia Hindu Sangam president A. Vaithilingam and Malaysian Hindu Youth Council chief R.P. Velayutham said they were disappointed that some of the 16 NGOs in the "Stop the Dissolution" campaign had used the platform to vent their hatred against a particular political leader.

In a joint statement here today, they said the NGOs should have instead expressed their shock at the sudden proposal to dissolve the fund without informing the public, especially the Indian community.

Vaithilingam and Velayutham said after two days of discussions, they concluded that they were happy with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's assurance to look into the needs of the Indian community.

The Prime Minister was quoted as saying last Saturday that the government would look into the fate of those affected by the dissolution of the fund and the needs of the Indian community.

Vaithilingam and Velayutham also appealed to the two leading local Tamil dailies to stop their "war" over the issue for the good of the community.

The two leaders, however, felt the timing of the fund's dissolution was wrong and the authorities should share part of the blame.

"We are disappointed that the Ministry of Human Resources insisted on presenting the Bill inspite of the appeal by a good section of the community," the statement said.

Both welcomed the setting up of a technical training institute on the land in Nibong Tebal belonging to the fund.

They also hoped that the expertise of the MIC-run Maju Institute of Educational Development (MIED) would be used in the setting up of the institute.

The two NGOs also called on MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu to reconsider his decision to cancel his meeting with them.

"We are prepared to meet him (Samy Vellu) even if the others are not. We need an opportunity to exchange views," they said in the statement.

-- BERNAMA

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