

16/06/1999

Reduce passport fees for retirees

Arjan Singh

I APPEAL to our beloved Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that passport fees for senior citizens inclusive of their spouses be reduced to RM150 or so from the current fee of RM300 in consideration of the following:

- * that the percentage and number of senior citizens in the population are still considered small; and,

- * that upon retirement not all retirees can be re-employed and even those who are re-employed may not be able to pay RM300 for a passport.

It ought not to be assumed that those who can afford to travel overseas can afford to fork out RM300 for a passport as trips could be:

- * be due to emergencies;
- * for medical treatment; and,
- * for visiting relatives who are ill whom they have not met for a long time.

Retired parents may also want to reduce the financial burden on their children and thus may wish to be self-reliant and finance their own trips instead of relying on their children to pay.

Instead of being cooped up in their homes and being afflicted with unwanted feelings, retirees may wish to visit neighbouring countries where the cost of living is lower or stay with their friends overseas or visit their children who have migrated.

And finally, they may wish to visit the holy places of their respective faiths.

I hope that due consideration would be given to this appeal.