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Mahathir-Suqiu

GOVERNMENT HAS NOT DECIDED ON SUQIU'S CLAIMS

ALOR SETAR, Dec 24 (Bernama) -- The government has not made any decision on the 83 demands submitted by the Malaysian Chinese Associations' Election Appeals Committee (Suqiu), Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The prime minister said the government would not consider any claim that touched on the social contract which could cause racial tension in the country.

"We have given our opinion that we will not consider any claim that touches on the social contract," he told reporters upon arrival at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport, Kepala Batas, near here, for a brief visit to Kedah.

He said claims that involved human rights were not a problem and could be considered.

Suqiu had angered the Malays with its demands which, among others, called for the special rights and privileges of the Malays to be abolished.

The Federation of Peninsular Malay Students (GPMS) has asked Suqiu to retract its demands and proposes to hold large-scale protest gatherings and to submit 100 counter claims including one requiring the Federal Constitution to state that the post of prime minister must be held by a Malay.

Asked whether he would meet with Suqiu to explain the government's decision, Dr Mahathir said: "I have met them and explained that the claims appeared to be extreme and they accepted it. I thought that it ended there but it was again raised in the Lunas by-election.

"It will not be productive to meet again," he said.

On the GPMS' claims he said: "I don't want to comment on that. What's important is that all parties should reduce claims that cause tension in the country.

-- BERNAMA

MAN MAI JK