

14 DEC 2000

Mahathir-GPMS

GPMS' DEMANDS WILL BE EXAMINED, SAYS PM

ALOR SETAR, Dec 14 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he will examine the 100 demands to be submitted by the Federation of Peninsular Malaysia Malay Students (GPMS) in response to the 17-point petition of the Malaysian Chinese Organisations' Election Appeals Committee (Suqiu).

"I will need to look through first whether there is basis for the demands or not," the prime minister said on his arrival at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport in Kepala Batas near here for a brief visit to the state.

According to news reports today, GPMS president Datuk Suhaimi Ibrahim was quoted to have said that the demands to be submitted to the government was in the interest of the Malays in response to the 83 demands of the Suqiu, made up of 13 Chinese associations and claims to have the endorsement of 2,095 Malaysian Chinese organisations before last year's general election.

Suhaimi was reported to have said that the demands would be submitted to Dr Mahathir soonest possible, after approval by an assembly of its members in Kuala Lumpur today.

"I have not yet read the demands...it's difficult to comment," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was expected that some other parties would submit similar demands when one party makes certain demands.

"This is what we want to avoid. Don't do these things because we have promoted understanding among the various races for the past 43 years. We do not want racial tensions to occur like in other countries with a multi-racial population," he said.

The prime minister said that it was not easy to maintain good racial relations in a multi-racial country like Malaysia.

"But, the moderate stance of the government comprising all the races has managed to preserve excellent and healthy relations among the races in the country," he said.

Responding further to reporters, Dr Mahathir said that the action of the opposition to try to embark on a movement akin to the Palestinians' "intifadah" in Malaysia would further worsen the situation.

"I believe soon the opposition will be throwing stones like in Palestine. The foreign media will then send out reports that our country is not stable following the people's uprising. Tourists and investors will not come and businesses will deteriorate," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the opposition was trying to link the cruelty of the Jews on the Palestinians to show that the Malaysian government was also just as cruel.

"The opposition, as much as they can, want to see the country destroyed, economically and politically, to garner support," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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