

20 JUL 2000

Mahathir-Sagadevan

MAHATHIR ADVISES FAMILY OF LATE DETECTIVE TO MANAGE AID WELL

KUALA KANGSAR, July 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised the family of the late detective sergeant R. Sagadevan, one of the hostages brutally murdered by the Gerik arms robbers, to manage well all relief aid for his children's future.

"With much aid received, it should be managed well for the welfare of his children," he said when approached by reporters after calling on the family of the late Sagadevan at the Sungai Perak safari resort here today.

At the same function the prime minister also met Sgt Mohamed Shah Ahmad, a hostage rescued from the gang which hid in Bukit Jenalek in Sauk near here with four hostages after staging the Sunday morning arms heist in Gerik on July 2.

Before surrendering on July 6, the 28-member gang also brutally executed another hostage, an army commando. One of the robbers was killed in a shoot-out with security forces.

Dr Mahathir said the government highly appreciated the sacrifices by the two security forces personnel.

"No matter how much aid is given, nothing can replace a husband or father that has gone forever," the prime minister said.

"I shall help her (S.Malliga, the late sergeant's wife) and family. We'll also assist Mat Shah in whatever way we can," he said.

Dr Mahathir spent almost an hour talking with Malliga and her five children Rajeswari, 24, Thanabalan, 22, Baladevan, 20, Poobaladevan, 17 and Kumarthevan, 13.

Mohamed Shah was accompanied by wife Rohaiyah Salleh, 40 and children Mohamed Saifol Adilli, 14, Hafizam, 21 and Nazira, 11.

The prime minister also handed over personal donations to the Sagadevan family and Mohamed Shah.

Meanwhile, S.Supramaniam, a nephew of the late Sagadevan told reporters that he was deeply moved by the prime minister's undertaking that he would ensure that other aid pledged would be forthcoming soon.

According to Supramaniam, the family had been pledged among other aid, a piece of land by the state government and a house by the MIC.

He said the Sagadevan family today held "karumathi" prayers to mark the 16th day of Sagadevan's passing and cast stone in the Kangsar River in a symbolic ritual early today for Sagadevan's soul to rest in peace.

Also present were International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, who is also the Member of Parliament for Kuala Kangsar, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Jamil Johari.

-- BERNAMA

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