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PM concerned weapons may fall into wrong hands

IPOH, Mon. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is concerned that the weapons and ammunition stolen from the Territorial Army camp in Grik may fall into the wrong hands.

The Prime Minister said that while the incident had not affected national security, he was worried that the weapons might be sold to others.

"We think we can manage this (national security) ... but our worry is that the weapons might be sold to certain quarters in need of arms."

Dr Mahathir was speaking at a Press conference after chairing a three-hour Umno supreme council meeting at the residence of Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Mohd Ghazali.

He had been asked whether the incident had threatened national security.

Dr Mahathir said the actual motive behind the robbery could not be determined as yet but "we know that firearms fetch a good price in the market".

"However, the army and the police have been directed to take the necessary action.

"We are confident of bringing the situation under control."

Dr Mahathir was also asked if lax security had made the robbery possible.

He said security had been tightened following several incidents where weapons belonging to the army and police were stolen but that the incident in Grik was a bit different as the perpetrators were so convincing in their act.

Dr Mahathir said the robbers had worn military uniforms, complete with beret and epaulettes, adding that the guards were overwhelmed by this.

He said the robbers had then taken advantage of the situation.

Asked if the large number of weapons stolen indicated that the incident was a prelude to something bigger, he did not rule out the possibility.

"I do not know if it is a prelude to something but certainly it is a prelude to something of that size," he said in reference to the large number of weapons stolen.

Dr Mahathir said the Umno supreme council also discussed the incident and took a serious view of the matter.

On whether there could be a political motive behind the incident, he said one could not discount any possibility until concrete proof was obtained to indicate otherwise.

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