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Mahathir-Rulers

RULERS AGREE TO ACT TO CHECK SPLIT AMONG MUSLIMS

PUTRAJAYA, March 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Conference of Rulers which met yesterday has agreed to adopt certain actions to reunite Muslims in the country divided by politics.

The prime minister said the Rulers reached the agreement upon him briefing the meeting on the state of Muslim unity in Malaysia.

"I briefed the Rulers at yesterday's meeting on national affairs especially problems facing Muslims in Malaysia. All the Rulers expressed concern over the problems and will take certain actions to reunite the Muslims. This is their decision," Dr Mahathir said.

It was now up to the Rulers to determine the form of actions they would take towards that end, the prime minister said.

He told reporters this after presenting the national flag "Jalur Gemilang" to the Proton-PERT team representing Malaysia at the Gudang Garam Rally of Indonesia Championship from March 31 to April 3.

Dr Mahathir expressed hope that all Muslims in the country would be receptive to whatever actions the Malay Rulers proposed to take since the Federal Constitution provides that religious problems come under their responsibility.

At the same time, the prime minister said, the Malay Rulers cannot be involved in politics.

"Therefore, if the problems of the Muslims relate to religion, then this the responsibility of the Rulers and they cannot act individually but as the Conference of Rulers," he said.

According to the prime minister, the Rulers' decision to reunite Muslims was a consensus.

The 185th meeting of the Conference of Rulers, over two days, was chaired by Sultan Ahmad Shah of Pahang at Istana Negara in Kuala Lumpur and ended yesterday.

Several quarters have urged the Malay Rulers to seek ways to arrest the widening gap between the Malays because of political inclinations and check the misuse of religion for selfish political ends.

Earlier, in a brief speech at the handing over of the national flag, Dr Mahathir wished the Malaysian team success in the rally and reminded the team members to uphold Malaysia's good name.

The Rally of Indonesia is the first leg of the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship and the circuit includes Australia, New Zealand, China, Malaysia and Thailand.

Dr Mahathir, normally attired in full Malay dress on Friday, displayed his skills in handling a turbo-powered four-wheel-drive Proton rally version when he tried out the car in the parking bay of the Prime Minister's Department.

He was accompanied by national rally driver Karamjit Singh who will be driving the machine in the Indonesian rally.

-- BERNAMA

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