

24/04/2001

#### Opposition MPs disrupt proceedings for 10 minutes

THE tabling of the Eighth Malaysia Plan at the Dewan Rakyat was disrupted for about 10 minutes when Opposition members objected to a decision by Deputy Speaker Datuk Lim Si Cheng to disallow a motion tabled by the Barisan Nasional.

The motion by Bung Moktar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan) was to debate an alleged directive by the Terengganu Government to three institutes and 11 schools in the State to surrender to the State RM40 million of wang ihsan given to them by the Federal Government.

Pas members, including Terengganu Menteri Besar Abdul Hadi Awang (Pas-Marang) rose to object the Speaker's decision, ignoring calls by the Speaker to sit down and allow Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad proceed with the tabling of the Eighth Malaysia Plan.

Bung Moktar had said if the RM40 million was given to the State, it would be misused.

Lim had said the matter was one of public interest and specific in nature, but was not urgent and could be debated later.

Pas members, who appeared angry with the allegations, began shouting bantah, bantah (objection) and demanded that the motion be accepted. They were joined by members from Parti Keadilan Nasional and the DAP.

Things only quietened down when Lim insisted he was not going to tolerate the commotion and told the Opposition members to sit down.

At this point, Mustafa Ali (Pas-Dungun) rose to say all the requirements for a debate were met and the matter should be debated immediately. This was rejected by Lim.

Just as Dr Mahathir rose to begin his speech, Kerk Kim Hock (DAP-Kota Melaka) stood up to address the house.

Dr Mahathir and Kerk, who were seated opposite each other in the house, smiled at each other briefly and Dr Mahathir gave way to Kerk.

Kerk said he wanted to clear the air over certain newspaper reports on his three-day suspension from the house (which ended yesterday).

Lim said: "Though the Standing Orders of the house provides for a member the opportunity to address the house, this matter involves newspaper reports, so you should refer the matter to the newspapers concerned."

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