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Najib-Pakistan

DR M CAN MEDIATE IN INDIA-PAKISTAN CRISIS, SAYS NAJIB

PEKAN, June 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has received high recognition with the request for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to mediate in the India-Pakistan conflict, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

The request was made by Pakistan President's Special Envoy Najmuddin A. Shaikh in his meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday.

Najmuddin had said that Dr Mahathir could use his good offices to talk to the Indian Government to abate the strain in the India-Pakistan ties.

Najib said Dr Mahathir, as a credible, firm and just leader, had been recognised by the world and seen as a possible mediator to the conflict involving the two nuclear powers in South Asia.

"The suggestion made by Najmuddin was in respect for Dr Mahathir as a credible leader, whether Dr Mahathir will accept, that's another question, but given the close ties between him and the leaders of India and Pakistan, he can become a mediator to resolve the strained ties," he told reporters after opening the Community Development Department (Kemas)-run kindergarten in Peramu Jaya 1 here.

"This is a high recognition for our Prime Minister as Dr Mahathir is internationally renowned as a credible, firm and just leader. As such, he and his leadership are valued not only in Pakistan and in India but in many places in the world," he said.

Nevertheless, Najib expressed disappointment that at a time when Dr Mahathir's leadership was gaining worldwide recognition, there were certain quarters in the country who poisoned the minds of pre-schoolers and instil hatred against government leaders.

He said their political agenda was to influence children that the government leaders were cruel to the Muslims and these children would grow up to oppose everything done by the government.

"When they grow older, they will tend to think that whatever is done by the government albeit good will be viewed as something bad," he said.

On investigations into irregularities in the Perwaja steel mill, Najib said a concerted effort by the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) to probe into the case showed that the government had no intention to cover-up as was alleged by certain quarters.

"The government has no intention to close the Perwaja case, if there are groups which accuse the government of doing so, they are wrong, it's proven now their claims are not true at all.

"During Dr Mahathir's visit to Switzerland on Monday, he brought along three ACA officers and the Prime Minister was given a firm commitment by the Swiss Confederation President Kasper Villiger (to help Malaysia gain access to information on ill-gotten funds deposited in Swiss banks).

"This shows getting the evidence in the Perwaja case has been the main obstacle. This is the reason why it's so difficult to take action on the culprits unless we have clear proof," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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