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Mahathir-Singapore

ADS ON WATER ISSUE ARE FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW FACTS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

SUBANG, July 17 (Bernama) -- Advertisements placed in local dailies since Sunday on the water issue with Singapore is to inform the people the facts behind the issue, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"People should know the facts, that's all," he told reporters at the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) base here on arrival from a three-day working visit to Ukraine.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived at about 7.30am accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, was greeted by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy and Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng as well as other dignitaries.

The water issue between Malaysia and Singapore resurfaced after the republic published a booklet which claims Malaysia does not have the right to negotiate the price of raw water it supplies to the republic, now fixed at 3 sen per 1,000 gallons.

To counter Singapore's allegations, Malaysia's National Economic Action Council (NEAC) has placed a series of advertisements in major local newspapers explaining why the price should be reviewed.

The two countries had signed two water agreements and the price of water sourced from Johor, supplied to Singapore, had not been reviewed over the last 40 years.

Asked on the statement by the Singapore Foreign Ministry that the advertisements were old arguments, the Prime Minister said:

"It may be old but they should have told us about it. Many people don't know, so it must be new to a lot of people."

On the lifting of suspension by MCA on its two Penang state assemblymen, the Prime Minister said the Barisan Nasional (BN) Supreme Council will discuss the matter.

"That, we will have to discuss," said Dr Mahathir, who is the BN chairman.

Last week, the MCA presidential council reinstated the elected representative for Jawi, Tan Cheng Liang, and Datuk Keramat's Lim Boo Chang after a seven-month suspension.

Last Dec 16, the council had "suspended indefinitely" both Lim and Tan after an internal disciplinary inquiry following their move to abstain from voting against an opposition motion at the State Legislative Assembly.

Their move, to abstain from voting against the motion to postpone the RM1.01 billion Penang Outer Ring Road (PORR) project, led to criticism from BN component parties as they were deemed to have breached the coalition's code of conduct.

On Jan 7, the BN supreme council endorsed MCA's decision to suspend the duo.

-- BERNAMA

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