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DAP-Singapore

S'PORE LEADERS EMBARKING UPON DIVERSIONARY TACTICS, SAYS DAP

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- The Opposition DAP said today that Singapore should look for pragmatic measures to overcome its economic ills which should not be placed squarely on the shoulders of Malaysia as a scapegoat.

Its deputy chairman, Karpal Singh, said that no doubt, it is Singapore's poor economic performance which has led to its leaders embarking upon diversionary tactics.

"This political manoeuvre is not something new. Singapore should not look for lame excuses for its conduct by saying the water price dispute between the two countries is not a question of price, but of sovereignty," he said in a statement here.

He said that Malaysia should not take lightly the threat by Singapore leaders, particularly from Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew who has thrown honour to the wind by allowing the government to make public his correspondence with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the water issue.

Relations between Malaysia and Singapore are marked by several "irritants", chief among them are the water price revision issue and the sovereignty of Pulau Batu Puteh. Recently, Singapore Foreign Affairs Minister S. Jayakumar made public the letters between the two countries regarding the water price issue.

Karpal Singh said that Dr Mahathir could be congratulated for exemplary patience when saying that if there were provocative comments from Singapore, Malaysia would respond only if there was a need and would be done in a non-aggressive manner.

"However, Singapore's obvious belligerence and beating the war drums may involve taking the retaliatory measures on the part of Malaysia if the irritation become unbearable," he said.

Karpal Singh furthermore advised the government in future to label all correspondence with Singapore leader "Without Prejudice" as it is difficult to trust them and reliance on good faith alone does not appear to be enough.

"Jayakumar is taking an exercise in flights of fancy by asserting Singapore's main concern was that if Malaysia refused to honour water agreements, would it not be breaching the sanctity of the related Separation Agreement, which guarantees Singapore independence.

"Singapore leaders should not forget independence was given to them on a silver platter without their asking," he said.

Karpal Singh said: "It is difficult to comprehend Jayakumar's outburst "Any breach of the water agreements must call into question the Separation Agreement and can undermine our very existence.""

He said that Malaysia should not leave unanswered Singapore's assertion that the exchanges between leaders of both countries, in the form of 19 letters released to the media, provide "conclusive evidence" of the "misinformation put out by Malaysia."

"Such accusations are an insult which the Malaysia Government should not take sitting down" he said.

-- BERNAMA

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