

ICERD: Government gives assurance over Article 153

BERNAMA

15/11/2018

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- The government today gave the assurance that it will not abolish Article 153 of the Federal Constitution if it ratifies the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department P. Waytha Moorthy gave the assurance in the Dewan Rakyat when replying to a supplementary question from Datuk Seri Azalina Othman (BN-Pengerang) who wanted to know the government stand on the matter.

Article 153 pertains to the reservation of quotas in respect of services, permits, etc, for Malays and natives of Sabah and Sarawak.

Waytha Moorthy said the government will hold a consultation on ICERD in the first quarter of 2019 to obtain legal opinions from within and outside the country as well as the intellectual opinions of the people.

This consultation is necessary because the issues pertaining to ICERD have not been fully comprehensible and have led to public concerns and anxiety, he added.

"This consultation process is indeed in line with the view and advice of the Prime Minister (Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad) when, at the United Nations General Assembly, he stated that 'the New Malaysia will firmly espouse the principles promoted by the UN in our international engagements'," he said during the Ministers' Question Time.

In her original question, Azalina wanted the government to state in detail the exemption that will be given to Malaysia if the country ratified ICERD as well as the indicators that determine that the country has achieved the objectives mentioned in Article 1(4) of ICERD.

Article 1(4) states: "Special measures taken for the sole purpose of securing adequate advancement of certain racial or ethnic groups or individuals requiring such protection as may be necessary in order to ensure such groups or individuals equal enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms shall not be deemed racial discrimination, provided, however, that such measures do not, as a consequence, lead to the maintenance of separate rights for different racial groups and that they shall not be continued after the objectives for which they were taken have been achieved."

Waytha Moorthy said the consultation has to be conducted to obtain agreement on ICERD before the government makes any final decision to ratify the convention.

-- BERNAMA

© 2018 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. Disclaimer | Privacy Policy| Security Policy

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/en/news.php?id=1665200>