

Making permit a condition to build houses of worship

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- The government will pass a resolution to make it a condition that houses of worship such as mosques, temples or churches cannot be built without the permission of the local authorities, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said currently the problem was that "temples are being built on other people's land".

"That (requirement) will solve the problem. The problem now is because temples are built without any regard as to who owns the land, and later when the owner wants back the land, it will become a problem.

"Temples are being built anywhere, even on other people's land. That is the problem we are seeing today," he told a press conference after the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) supreme council meeting at Menara Yayasan Selangor.

Dr Mahathir was responding to a question on the government's move to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents such as that at the Sri Maha Mariamman Temple in USJ 25, Putra Heights.

Dr Mahathir also said that the government will give an explanation on the temple incident in the Dewan Rakyat tomorrow if the emergency motion tabled by lawmakers for Parliament to debate the incident is approved by Speaker Datuk Mohamad Ariff Md Yusuf.

Yesterday, Pakatan Harapan and Barisan Nasional lawmakers had put aside their political differences and submitted a motion to the Speaker to debate the issue over the relocation of the Sri Maha Mariamman Temple in USJ 25, Putra Heights, near Subang Jaya.

Commenting on the position of the temple, Dr Mahathir said it was also not very clear at the moment.

Asked whether the riots had anything to do with the planned rally in protest against the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Dr Mahathir said the government will not stop people from demonstrating but it must be done in a proper way with no criminal act involved.

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