

D156

U E212 AAE
MAHATHIR-UMNO
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 16 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY UMNO (BARU) WILL CONTEST IN ANY BY-ELECTION HELD FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF UMNO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT .

IF THERE WAS A CONTEST, UMNO WOULD BE THERE, HE TOLD REPORTERS HERE AFTER LAUNCHING THE BOOK +SUNGAI KOROK WAN MAT SAMAN+ WRITTEN BY DEWAN RAKYAT SPEAKER TAN SRI MOHAMED ZAHIR ISMAIL.

HE SAID THIS WHEN ASKED IF UMNO (BARU) WAS PREPARED TO CONTEST THE JOHOR BAHRU SEAT TO BE VACATED BY FORMER WELFARE MINISTER DATUK SHAHRIR ABDUL SAMAD.

DATUK SHAHRIR HAD SAID THAT HE WANTED TO VACATE THE SEAT ON JULY 8 TO TEST WHETHER THE PEOPLE SUPPORTED UMNO (BARU) OR THE OLD UMNO.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE DID NOT KNOW THE NUMBER OF UMNO MPS AND STATE ASSEMBLYMEN TO BE PROPOSED FOR EXPULSION FROM THE BARISAN NASIONAL FOR REFUSING TO JOIN UMNO (BARU). -- MORE
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HE ALSO SAID A DECISION HAD NOT BEEN MADE WHETHER FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MP FOR KOTA TINGGI DATUK MUSA HITAM SHOULD ALSO BE PROPOSED TO BE EXPELLED FROM THE BN FOLLOWING THE LATTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT JOIN THE NEW PARTY.

HE STRESSED THAT A MEETING HE WOULD HAVE WITH UMNO (BARU) MENTERIS BESAR, DEPUTY MENTERIS BESAR AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES TOMORROW WAS ONLY A BRIEFING ON CURRENT ISSUES.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT THE CABINET MEETING YESTERDAY DISCUSSED THE REPORTED ACTION BY MALAYSIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS (MTUC) SECRETARY-GENERAL DR V. DAVID WHICH MIGHT RESULT IN THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GENERALISED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) STATUS FROM MALAYSIA.

HOWEVER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE CABINET DID NOT DISCUSS DR DAVID'S CITIZENSHIP STATUS OR ACTION THAT COULD BE TAKEN AGAINST HIM. THE CABINET QUESTIONED DR DAVID'S CONDUCT WHICH COULD BE DESCRIBED AS UNPATRIOTIC, HE SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT ALSO DOES NOT EXPECT HIM TO BE A PATRIOT BUT HE SHOULD THINK ABOUT THE WELFARE OF WORKERS IN THE COUNTRY AND NOT PLACE IMPORTANCE ON SELF INTEREST ONLY,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT TOOK A SERIOUS VIEW OF THE ACTIONS OF DR DAVID WHO DESPITE BEING A MALAYSIAN WAS PREPARED TO GO TO AN EXTENT OF PRESSURING OTHERS TO THREATEN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY..

ON REPORTS OF VIETNAM'S WILLINGNESS TO PULL OUT FROM KAMPUCHEA AT THE END OF THE MONTH, DATUK SERI DATUK MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA HAD TO CHECK IF THESE REPORTS WERE TRUE.

IF THE REPORTS WERE TRUE, THE GOVERNMENT WELCOMED THE ACTION BY THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. -- BERNAMA
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