

MAHATHIR - MIC

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IPOH, APRIL 23 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY HE DOES NOT INTEND TO INTERVENE TO SETTLE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MIC PRESIDENT DATUK SERI S. SAMY VELLU AND HIS DEPUTY DATUK S. SUBRAMANIAM.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID BOTH THE LEADERS SHOULD KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DOING (FOR THE GOOD OF THE PARTY).

+I DON'T THINK I CAN DO ANY GOOD. THEY MUST MUST KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS HERE WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD INTERVENE TO THRASH OUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DATUK SERI SAMY VELLU AND DATUK SUBRAMANIAM SOURED FOLLOWING THE OCT 15 PARTY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN WHICH DATUK SERI SAMY VELLU WAS CHALLENGED BY THE LATTER.

THE MIC PRESIDENT, WHO RETAINED HIS POST, HAD SEVERAL TIMES MADE STATEMENTS THAT HE WOULD DROP DATUK SUBRAMANIAM AND HIS ALLY VICE-PRESIDENT DATUK K. PATHMANABAN IN THE FORTHCOMING GENERAL ELECTION.

YESTERDAY, DATUK SERI SAMY VELLU SAID THAT THE FEDERAL TERRITORY MIC, WHICH IS HEADED BY DATUK SUBRAMANIAM, WAS CONSTITUTIONALLY DEFUNCT FOR FAILING TO HOLD ITS STATE CONGRESS MEETINGS. -- MORE
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ASKED TO COMMENT ON DATUK SERI SAMY VELLU'S STATEMENT RECENTLY THAT HE MIGHT CONSIDER PULLING OUT THE MIC FROM THE BARISAN NASIONAL IF THE COALITION'S OTHER COMPONENT PARTIES INSISTED THAT HIS RIVALS BE RETAINED AS CANDIDATES AND THAT WITHOUT THE MIC THE BN WILL LOSE IN MANY OF THE SEATS THE PRIME MINSITER SAID:

+WITHOUT UMNO ALSO MIC WILL LOSE. WE DEPEND UPON EACH OTHER.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO BN CHAIRMAN SAID: +THERE IS NO CONSTITUENCY WITH INDIAN MAJORITY. WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE INDIAN CANDIDATES BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN RACIAL HARMONY.+

ASKED WHETHER THE SQUABBLES IN THE MIC MIGHT AFFECT THE BN PERFORMANCE IN THE GENERAL ELECTION, HE SAID: +IT MIGHT AFFECT, IT MIGHT NOT AFFECT. WE DON'T KNOW. WE WILL SEE WHEN THE ELECTION COMES.+

COMMENTING ON SPECULATION BY OPPOSTION PARTIES THAT THE ELECTION IS JUST ROUND THE CORNER, THE PRIME MINISTER QUIPPED THAT +IT COULD BE A SHORT CORNER OR A LONG ONE.+

ASKED WHETHER THE BN WAS READY TO FACE THE GENERAL ELECTION, HE SAID THE COALITION WAS ALWAYS READY TO GO FOR THE POLLS +BUT WE DO NOT SEE WHY WE SHOULD SHORTEN OUR PERIOD AS A GOVERNMENT.+

+WE WERE ELECTED FOR A FIVE-YEAR TERM, UNLESS THERE ARE VERY GOOD REASONS WE DON'T HOLD ELECTIONS,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA
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