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MAHATHIR-ACA R R R
BM

ALOR SETAR, MAY 26 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID ALL PARTIES SHOULD RESPECT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY (ACA) IN CARRYING OUT INVESTIGATION ON UNIVERSITI MALAYA VICE-CHANCELLOR DR SYED HUSSEIN AL-ATTAS.

AS AN INDEPENDENT BODY, THE ACA HAD THE RIGHTS TO CONDUCT SUCH INVESTIGATION AT ITS DISCRETION, HE SAID.

+IF WE WANT IT TO BE INDEPENDENT, WE CANNOT INTERFERE IN ITS BUSINESS,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS AT THE THANKSGIVING FEAST GIVEN BY FARMERS IN THE MUDA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MADA) AREA IN KEPALA BATAS NEAR HERE TODAY.

REPORTERS HAD APPROACHED THE PRIME MINISTER TO COMMENT ON RECENT CHECKS BY ACA OFFICERS AT DR SYED HUSSEIN'S RESIDENCE. THEY ALSO TOOK AWAY SOME DOCUMENTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WISH FOR SUCH AN INCIDENT TO HAPPEN FOR THE SAKE OF ITS POLITICAL INTEREST, IT COULD NOT DO ANYTHING BUT TO RESPECT THE ACA'S INDEPENDENCE.-- MORE

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HE SAID BECAUSE OF THE INCIDENT, THE GOVERNMENT'S IMAGE AND THAT OF EDUCATION MINISTER ANWAR IBRAHIM (WHO APPOINTED DR SYED HUSSEIN AS VICE-CHANCELLOR) ALSO SUFFERED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ACA INVESTIGATION ON DR SYED HUSSEIN HAD THE GOVERNMENT + SANDWICHED+ BETWEEN THOSE SUPPORTING DR SYED HUSSEIN AND THOSE NOT.

THE ISSUE CONCERNING DR SYED HUSSEIN SURFACED FOLLOWING MARANG MP HAJI ABDUL RAHMAN BAKAR'S ALLEGATIONS IN PARLIAMENT THAT THE VICE CHANCELLOR HAD APPOINTED NON-BUMIPUTERAS TO POSTS OF FACULTY DEANS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY HELD BY BUMIPUTERA LECTURERS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID WHATEVER ACTION THE GOVERNMENT TOOK IN THIS MATTER, THERE WERE BOUND TO BE DISSATISFIED PARTIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DENIED THAT THE ACA HAD ACTED ON GOVERNMENT'S INSTRUCTION SAYING THAT OBVIOUSLY IT WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD PUT ITSELF AT A DISADVANTAGE.-- MORE

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ON WHETHER THE ACA WOULD MAKE PUBLIC THE OUTCOME OF ITS INVESTIGATION ON DR SYED HUSSEIN, HE SAID: +THE ACA IS AN INDEPENDENT BODY. IT IS FREE TO MAKE DECISIONS+.

THE PRIME MINISTER DISPELLED RUMOURS OF RIFTS BETWEEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GHAFAR BABA AND ENCIK ANWAR.

+SUCH RUMOURS ARE CREATED BY ENEMIES OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE IMPENDING GENERAL ELECTION +, HE SAID.-- BERNAMA

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