

CNS8330

U GE 22-03 00125 EB779

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Mahathir - Usukan

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JITRA, March 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that the Barisan Nasional (BN) will contest the Usukan state by-election in Sabah.

He said the BN need not challenge the State Assembly declaration that the seat had fallen vacant following Tun Datu Mustapha Datu Harun's decision to resign from Usno and join Umno.

Asked to comment on Tun Datu Mustapha's decision to contest and not to challenge the state assembly decision in court, the Prime Minister said: +We will contest the seat...+

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters after breaking the fast with the people at Masjid Kampung Telok Malek here. -- more

♥22/03/22-19MST

CNS8333

U GE 22-03 00195 EB780

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Mahathir - Usukan 2 Jitra

Asked whether he had advised Tun Datu Mustapha not to challenge the state assembly decision in court, the Prime Minister replied: +I feel there is no need to go to court... we can contest.+

On the candidate for the by-election, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this had not been decided.

The Election Commission had said the writ for the by-election would be issued next week following the state assembly decision to declare the seat vacant.

Earlier speaking at the breaking of the fast, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Muslims in this country should enhance their challenge so as to emerge as a group to be reckoned with in this world.

He invited the people to learn from the lessons of the Gulf War where Iraq was defeated. Muslims would not be able to match the strength of others if they did not have knowledge and equal capabilities.

+We can be angry with the Jews... but we cannot fight their strength because we do not want to acquire the knowledge that can stand up to the Jews.+ -- more

♥22/03/23-01MST

CNS8335

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Mahathir - Usukan 3 Jitra

He regretted that many Muslims did not consider it important to acquire knowledge but dismissed it as a worldly pursuit.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also urged the people to pause and reflect on Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War.

Among the reasons for its defeat was its dependence on arms from the Soviet Union, the United States and France and when these countries no longer supplied it with spare parts, Iraq could not do anything.

The practice of depending on others was dangerous and when one nation was conquered by others the consequences would be very bad indeed, he said.

+If we come under the control of others, our children are likely to change their religion,+ he added.

The Prime Minister's wife Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Osman Aroff were also present.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and his wife returned to Kuala Lumpur tonight. -- Bernama

♥22/03/23-14MST