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COURT DECISION ON STATUS OF KELANTAN STATE ASSEMBLYMEN CORRECT: PM

Mahathir-court

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KUALALUMPUR, Nov 8, (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the High Court decision on the expulsion of two Umno representatives as Kelantan state assemblymen is correct and one expected by Umno.

The Umno president said the party was confident from the start that the Kelantan State Legislative Assembly's adoption of an amendment to the state Constitution, barring party-hopping, was ultra vires the Federal Constitution.

The High Court today ruled that the amendment is partially invalid and ultra vires the Federal Constitution.

Justice Datuk Eusoff Chin made the ruling in favour of expelled Kelantan state assemblymen, Haji Nordin Salleh and Haji Wan Mohamad Najib, who won the seats on Parti Semangat 46 tickets in the general election last October but later joined Umno.

Commenting on the ruling, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is also Kelantan Umno Liaison Chairman, said he was happy with the decision. -- more

▼08/11/20-30MST

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He added: +Tf from the start, before the election, the people had been informed that the representatives chosen by them would be expelled if they switched parties and the people made their choice fully aware of this, -then it is correct to expel them (the representatives) when they switch parties.

+But the people who chose them did so in the belief that their candidates would not be dropped from the (state legislative) assembly just because they switched parties.+

He told a press conference at the end of the first day of the Umno General Assembly here that because the people of Kelantan were not informed of the condition before-hand, it was not fair to slap the condition on them after they had chosen their representatives.

+We do not look at it from the aspect of who was elected, we look from that of the rights of the people who elected,+ he said. -- more

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The Prime Minister said he believed the PAS-led state government would appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision.

+But this basis (that the people were not imposed the condition before the election) cannot be denied,+ he added.

Replying to a question, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the situation in Sabah was different although the state also had laws barring party-hopping by elected representatives.

In Sabah, the voters were aware that the candidate elected would be expelled from the state legislative assembly if he switched parties because the provision was made before the election, he added. -- Bernama

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