

Plan to take legal action against Pas for contempt

MALACCA, Thurs. — Umno will initiate contempt of court proceedings against the Pas-led Kelantan Government if it is satisfied that the State Assembly's action on two Barisan Nasional Assemblymen amounts to a disrespect to the court, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister and Umno president said defiance of a court decision amounted to contempt.

"If this is so, we will take court action," he told reporters after opening a \$300 million Hualon Textile factory in Tangga Batu near here.

Dr Mahathir added, however, that Umno leaders would discuss the issue before taking action.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on a decision by the Kelantan State Assembly to refer the two Assemblymen to a select committee for disciplinary action.

The action against Nordin Salleh, the Assemblyman for Sungai Pinang, and Wan Najib Wan Mohamed, the Assemblyman for Limbongan, who had quit Semangat 46 to join Umno, was taken on Monday for allegedly tarnishing the image of the House and cheating the peo-

ple in the constituencies.

The Supreme Court earlier this month ruled that the anti-party hopping law passed by the State Assembly last year was void. It also ordered the reinstatement of Nordin and Wan Najib who had been removed following their joining Umno.

Dr Mahathir said the Kelantan Government could not, on one hand, claim to respect the court while at the same time act to annul a court decision.

"This is being hypocritical," he said.

Referring to a remark by Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat that the action was to respect the wishes of the people, Dr Mahathir said it was the wishes of Pas rather than the people.

He said: "If it wants to respect the people's wishes, then it should have made things clear before and not after an election ... that any Assemblyman who switches party will be removed.

"In this case, the law, which disregards the rights of the Assemblymen and the people, was passed after the elections. Surely this is not the people's wishes."