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Mahathir - S46
SEMANGAT 46 PLAYING UP MALAY SENTIMENTS, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4, (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was clear that Parti Semangat 46 was trying to turn the proposed constitutional amendment to end the immunity of the rulers into a political issue by playing up Malay sentiments.

+At first they supported the proposal (to amend the constitution) but now they have second thoughts and want to turn it into a political issue, by using Malay sentiments,+ he told reporters at the Sungai Besi RMAF Station before leaving for Alor Setar this evening to open the National level Tilawah Al-Quran in Kangar tonight.

The Prime Minister was asked to comment on the motion approved by Semangat 46 special assembly opposing the proposed constitutional amendment to end the immunity of the rulers.--more

▼04/01/19-15MST

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He said Parti Semangat 46 also tried to be the +champion of the Malays+ and use the issue to attract attention to the party + which has nothing else left.+

+They (Semangat 46) have no stance whatsoever...they will use whatever issue that can be used,+ he added.

On the gathering planned by Semangat 46 to welcome home the Sultan of Kelantan and Raja Perempuan at the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport in Kota Bharu on Wednesday, Dr Mahathir said:+ That is their problem... if they want to have it they can do so.+

+They want to show that they are loyal to the rulers: We are also loyal to the rulers but it is not necessary for us to have a gathering,+ he said.--more

▼04/01/19-29MST

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The Prime Minister was happy with the move by the Sultan of Johore to call off the Friday gathering at the Istana Besar in Johor Baharu, saying that it had helped reduced the tension.

+This is the beginning of good atmosphere in our efforts to resolve the constitutional amendment issue,+ he said.

Asked about his meeting with several Umno leaders today, Lr Mahathir said the meeting was to study the draft of the proposed amendment.

He said the final draft had yet to be completed and hoped that it would be ready by Wednesday.

The Prime Minister said the final draft would be discussed by the Cabinet on Wednesday.--more

▼04/01/19-40MST

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In ALOR SETAR, Dr Mahathir was asked for detail of his meeting with the Umno leaders. He said the meeting only discussed about the draft which would be tabled in Dewan Rakyat on Jan 18.

+The draft will have three section, to amend the provision for the immunity of rulers, provision on sedition (not Sedition Act) and provision on power to pardon,+ he said at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport.

Dr Mahathir said the content of the draft would be announced when the government was ready to do so.

Asked if there was any proposal in the draft for the Prime Minister to chair the Pardon's Board, he said:+ The draf has yet to be approved by the Cabinet, so it is not official.+--more

▼04/01/20-00MST

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Asked to comment on Sabah Chief Minister's suggestion that Umno be renamed United Malaysian National Organisation to reflect a Malaysian race, The Prime Minister said:+ The UMNO members in Sabah do not complain about it....why cant he mind his own business.+

He said the PBS (Parti Bersatu Sabah) too did not reflect Malaysian unity but only Sabah.

On Semangat 46 plans to hold gatherings throughout the country, Dr Mahathir said,+ if they can have, other parties would also like to have.+

+It is hard to control a gathering, there is bound to be tension,+ he said, adding that was why the Barisan Nasional did not plan to have one.

Asked on the purchase of a condominium unit worth RM370,000 in Taman Seputih by MARA, he said the government was studying whether it was in line with the policies of MARA to do so.

The Prime Minister, who arrived with his wife Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, was met at the airport by Perlis Menteri Besar Dr Abdul Hamid Pawanteh and Kedah and Perlis exco members.-- Bernama

▼04/01/20-26MST