

Order not to co-operate with

PM: Kelantan

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Infrastructural development and other projects in Kelantan will be affected if it is true that the State Government has directed State and federal officers not to co-operate with federal Ministers.

Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today several projects and administrative matters in Kelantan depended on the federal Government, especially since it involved federal officers.

If the officers do not co-operate with the federal Government it would hinder development in the State, he added.

He was responding to reporters' questions on a report today in which Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Annuar Musa was quoted as saying the Kelantan Government has directed State and federal officers not to co-operate with federal Ministers in any matter.

It further quoted Annuar as saying that according to reports reaching him, the officers in Kelantan had also been told to get permission from the State Government first before meeting federal Ministers.

Dr Mahathir said the Government would have to ascertain whether there was such a directive from the Pas-led State Government.

"If it is true then it is very sad because development projects in Kelantan will be affected and cannot be implemented.

"I think the State leaders are playing politics and this is not wise," he said during a *Hari Raya Aidilfitri* reception for VIPs at his Sri Perdana residence.

Even if the State Government had issued such a directive, he said federal offi-

cers should realise they work for the federal Government.

"They are duty-bound to heed the orders of the federal Government. If they refuse to follow federal directives and do not perform their tasks then the Government will have little choice but to take action against them.

"After all they work for the Government and we pay their salaries."

In Kota Baru, Kelantan Deputy Menteri Besar II Rozali Isahak today admitted that the State Government has issued a directive prohibiting its officers from co-operating with the federal Government, including its Ministers.

"So for the State officers, all dealings with the federal Government offices or agencies will have to get prior approval from the State Government," he said.

However, he denied the directive was also meant for federal officers as the State Government did not have jurisdiction over them, including those seconded to the State departments and agencies.

Several State departments including the Public Works Department, Forestry Department and the Welfare Services Department are headed by federal officers.

Rozali also said the decision was made by the State Executive Council recently.

"The directive was issued after the federal Government had issued a circular, which among others, directed federal officers, including those in statutory bodies and local authorities, from following certain royal directives and requests.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid had issued the General Circular 4/93 which among the guide-

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will suffer

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lines directed federal officers to ignore royal orders to transfer officers or discipline them or greet returning royalty during working hours.

Rozali said the State directive was contained in a circular issued by the State Secretary's office, which has been distributed to the State Government offices and agencies. It was learnt that the directive took immediate effect.

Relations between the State and federal Governments were strained when the Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah came to power in Kelantan after the 1990 general election.

Among the actions taken by the State Government, led by Pas, immediately after the election was terminating the services of *imam*, *penghulu* and temporary workers attached to the local authorities.

The State Government continued with its tough

stand in dealing with the federal Government, including the decision early this year to repossess land allotted to federal agencies that had not yet been developed.

Early this month, the Perdana Hotel and Perdana Resort, both owned by the State Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), barred federal Ministers from holding functions on their premises.

On March 9, it was reported that Annuar's reservation to hold a breaking of fast function with some 200 community leaders and federal department heads at the Perdana Hotel was cancelled by the management.

The latest directive will create difficulties because in the planning and financial disbursement of funds for federal projects in Kelantan there has to be a close working relationship between State and federal officers.

The federal Government and Pas had problems in

Kelantan even when the latter was in the Barisan Nasional.

In 1977, Kelantan was ruled by the Barisan Nasional coalition which also included Pas and its Menteri Besar, Datuk Mohamed Nasir of Pas, was toppled when 20 Pas Assemblymen passed a vote of no-confidence against him.

A state of lawlessness existed which prompted the Government to step in and take over the administration of the State. Subsequently Pas was expelled from the Barisan Nasional.

On Nov 9, 1977, a state of emergency was declared in the State and a senior government officer Hashim Aman (now Tan Sri) was appointed the director of the Kelantan Government.

On Feb 13, 1978, the Kelantan State Assembly was dissolved and elections were called where candidates put up by Umno and Berjasa scored a thumping victory.