

29/05/15-42MST

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Mahathir-Mustapha

NO URGENCY TO RESOLVE MUSTAPHA'S CASE, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 29<sup>93</sup> (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today there was no urgency to resolve the matter of Tun Datu Mustapha Harun having to resign as a Sabah assemblyman following his appointment as a federal minister.

"There is still plenty of time and there is nothing which demands urgency," he told reporters after bidding farewell to Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds at Carcosa Seri Negara, here. Reynolds left for Pulau Pinang later.

Dr Mahathir also said that Mustapha had yet to assume the post of Minister for Sabah Affairs, and that the date for him to take his oath of office had not been set.

The prime minister had announced on May 19 that Mustapha had been appointed Minister for Sabah Affairs. Soon afterwards, the Sabah government said Mustapha must resign as assemblyman as provided for by law before assuming the post of federal minister.

Dr Mahathir had also said that the government was studying several options it could take to enable Mustapha to retain his Usukan state seat, one of them being amending the law. -- more

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Mahathir-Mustapha 2 Kuala Lumpur

The Bar Council responded to the suggestion for amendment of the law by saying that it was unnecessary, particularly so when it was to accommodate one individual.

Asked for comments today on the statement of Bar Council president Zainur Zakaria, Dr Mahathir said the Bar Council should manage its own affairs first before criticising others.

"They must put their house in order before attempting to teach others," he said.

Asked about the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) claim that the party would win if a by-election was held in Usukan, Dr Mahathir said that such claims were a normal thing. -- more

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Mahathir-Mustapha 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur

In SEREMBAN, Law Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar, responding to the Bar Council statement, said the government had never amended the law for its own satisfaction or protection.

The government had not made any decision in the matter of Mustapha having to resign his state seat, he told reporters after opening the 19th annual general meeting of the Negeri Sembilan Malay Chamber of Commerce.

Syed Hamid said the Bar Council statement that the government was considering changing the law in Mustapha's case because the federal and state governments were from different parties smacked of politics.

He said the government was prepared to listen to the views of the Bar Council but was not bound to implement them. -- Bernama

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