

CNS9671

R PE 15-09 00181 EA797

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Ghafar-denial

GHAFAR DENIES SAYING THAT HE WILL STEP DOWN ONLY IF MAHATHIR DOES

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept. 15 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba today denied local newspaper reports which quoted him as saying that he would not step down from his present post if Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not relinquish his post.

"I deny having said in Seremban that I will withdraw when Dr Mahathir also does likewise," said Ghafar who contacted Bernama here.

Newspapers today quoted Ghafar as having said in Seremban on Monday night that he would sooner or later withdraw but it was inappropriate for him to step down as long as the Prime Minister was still around.

Ghafar was reported to have said this at a dinner attended by Rasah Umno division members.

However, Ghafar declined to comment further on the news reports which did not indicate which post he was referring to -- that of Deputy Prime Minister or Deputy President of UMNO. -- more

AH AAM LDB

▼15/09/18-29MST

CNS9681

R PE 15-09 00187 EA798

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Ghafar-denial 2 Kuala Lumpur

There has been a rising tide of calls to Ghafar, who is being challenged by Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for the UMNO deputy presidency in the party elections in November, to make way for Anwar.

Ghafar also said that he had never alleged that Sabah UMNO leaders had been bought over and that he at no time humiliated them as claimed by certain groups.

"News reports saying that I claimed there was cheating in the nomination of the UMNO Deputy President is also not true," he added.

He said that when speaking in Papar, Sabah, he only touched on two incidents which were reported to him.

The first was about the Bandau UMNO division in Sabah where 115 members were not allowed to attend the delegates conference and only 50 people made the decision.

The second was about divisional delegates conference chairmen who did not give members the opportunity to make nominations apart from the ones listed by the divisional heads. -- more

AH AAM LDB

▼15/09/18-34MST

CNS9687

R PE 15-09 00136 EA799

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Ghafar-denial 3 Kuala Lumpur

Ghafar said that after the divisional head read out the list of candidates for seats in the UMNO Supreme Council, it was followed immediately by a voice calling for nominations to be closed.

The proposal for nominations to be closed was quickly seconded and the conference chairman closed further nominations, he added.

"This matter has been planned. This contravenes the UMNO Constitution," he said.

He said as far as he knew there was not a single reporter at his function in Papar.

Usually, soon after a function, reporters would interview him but this did not happen in Papar, he added.

"How the news about it emerged I do not know," he said. -- more

AH AAM LDB

▼15/09/18-40MST

CNS9693

R PE 15-09 00102 EA800

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Ghafar-denial 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Ghafar said he did not want to make sweeping allegations without valid proof.

As such, he had asked Sabah UMNO Liaison Committee deputy chairman Tun Datu Haji Mustapha Datu Harun to hold a meeting to investigate the reports he received.

Asked what action he would take if the reports were found to be true, he said: "I will wait for the report of the Sabah UMNO Liaison Committee meeting for I will not resort to any action without any proof." -- Bernama

AH AAM LDB

▼15/09/18 40MST