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Razaleigh-Anwar

KU LI: I HAVE NO PLANS TO CHALLENGE ANWAR

KOTA BAHARU, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- Former president of Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said today he has never had any intention of challenging Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for the post of Umno deputy president after rejoining Umno.

"This is the speculation of writers. I myself have no such plans (because) I rejoined Umno with the others based on the decision made together at the last S46 general assembly," he said.

"After we reached a consensus at the discussion with (Prime Minister Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir there was no other motive. If there are others who make wild speculations, it's their right," he said when approached at his residence here after arriving from Kuala Lumpur this afternoon.

He was commenting on reports that he might challenge Anwar in the Umno elections in future.

Asked for his opinion whether such negative reports might affect his relationship with Anwar or others, he said it was up to them because "if we don't think as what was written how can it affect anyone ... it's up to the readers, for me it's nothing."

He also dispelled speculations that he would try to come back into the Cabinet.

"I have already stated to Dr Mahathir that I do not expect anything from him either from within the party or the government and he seems to accept my views," he said.

Asked if he could contribute if he was given a Cabinet post, he said it was difficult for him to answer and left it to the people to make an assessment.

"But for us who join Umno as ordinary members, we leave it to the party leadership and if it is felt that we can still serve then it is up to them."

On the proposal for a coalition government between Pas and Umno in Kelantan, Tengku Razaleigh said it demonstrated a change of attitude among Pas leaders.

"It looks like it could be the solution to end the problems of disunity among Muslims in Malaysia, particularly in Kelantan and also among the Malays," he added.

He said that to prove their sincerity in forming the coalition government, Pas must first retain the four Exco members who were formerly from the S46 and now had become Umno members.

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He said that to prove their sincerity in forming the coalition government, Pas must first retain the four Exco members who were formerly from the S46 and now had become Umno members.

"I feel the problem in Kelantan will end when the Exco members are accepted and the line-up need not be reshuffled or questioned so that the present government could be strengthened," he said.

He also suggested that should a coalition government be formed, the state Constitution could be amended to enable the appointment of two Menteris Besar, one each from Pas and Umno and at the same time, existing Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat did not have to step down.

However, he believed it was difficult for Umno to accept another Malay parti in a joint government because of Umno's principles.

"One day Pas itself must be dissolved and what is the need for another separate party. I feel this is good and will benefit the Muslim and Malay community," he said.

On the crisis between the state government under Pas and the palace, Tengku Razaleigh said it prolonged because Pas did not make any attempt to seek an audience with the Sultan. -- BERNAMA

RAR AO