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Mahathir - Kedah

I HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO DECIDE ON KEDAH MB POST- DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, March 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he has plenty of time to decide on the post of Kedah Menteri Besar.

"Not immediately, I have plenty of time," he replied when asked if he had made any decision on the matter following his meeting this morning at his office with Kedah Umno Members of Parliament and the party's 22 assemblymen from the state.

The Prime Minister and Umno President said at the meeting, they left it to him to make a decision.

"They left it to me to decide and they also gave their views on the present Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff and also on Datuk Seri Sanusi (Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, former agriculture minister and assemblyman for Kuah, Langkawi). I listened to their views."

"All 22 state assemblymen who made a public statement on the issue apologised for their mistake. They also stressed that it was not their intention to hurt my feelings," he said after talks with Cambodia's First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh at Carcosa Seri Negara here.

Dr Mahathir said all Umno elected representatives from Kedah including those who did not sign the memorandum to him, which they later made public, also attended the meeting.

He said he was first briefed by Kedah Umno Division heads who were also Members of Parliament before he met with the assemblymen.

He said the MPs also left it to him to decide on the appointment of Kedah Menteri Besar.

On the allegations made by the DAP MP for Kota Melaka Lim Guan Eng against Attorney-General Datuk Mohtar Abdullah in the Dewan Rakyat on Thursday, the Prime Minister said the opposition had no other better work to do than to call on people to step down.

"Actually he should step down if he is not right. His party should urge him to step down. I don't know why he is accusing the Attorney General of playing politics when he is only discharging his official duties as a government officer," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister reminded the relevant groups not to bring their political problems to court and hit out at the opposition for condemning the government when the courts found one of their number guilty.

They would label the court verdict as a consequence of political pressure, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the same laws were applicable to government ministers and opposition members but they think the court could not take action against the Opposition Leader.

"However if a government minister makes a small slip, they demand that he be sacked and put in jail. We subscribe to the rule of law and justice for everyone be they opposition members or others and the law cannot be bent so that someone can escape punishment," Dr Mahathir said. -- BERNAMA

ZAB AAM