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Mahathir-Appoint

YONG'S APPOINTMENT NEXT WEEK, NEW KEDAH MB YET TO BE DECIDED

KUALA LUMPUR, May 24 (Bernama) -- Datuk Yong Teck Lee will be appointed Sabah Chief Minister next week while the new Kedah Menteri Besar has yet to be decided, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the Sabah Yang Dipertua Negeri had been notified regarding the appointment of Yong, the president of Sabah Progressive Party, who will replace Datuk Salleh Said Keruak of Umno under a rotation system.

Dr Mahathir told reporters on his return from a 12-day overseas visit that he would decide on the appointment of the new Kedah Menteri Besar after discussing with his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Before he went abroad, the Prime Minister had announced that Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff had tendered his resignation.

He had also given general instructions to Anwar on the appointment of the new Sabah Chief Minister.

At that time, Yong was still facing an illegal procession charge in Sabah for which, if found guilty, he could be fined RM2,000 and thus be disqualified as an MP and state assemblyman as stipulated under the federal and state constitutions.

However, Yong later pleaded guilty to an amended charge of unlawful assembly and was fined RM1,000.

The prime minister, after receiving Osman's resignation letter, had held individual meetings with the Kedah state assemblymen and MPs but so far the name of Osman's successor has not been officially announced.

Prior to this, Anwar had said that the appointment of the new Kedah menteri besar would be made by the prime minister on his return home.

On Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's statement that he would meet Dr Mahathir again, the latter said the date had yet to be fixed.

"We can meet anytime, there is no problem," he said.

The two had met twice before to discuss Malay unity and the possibility of Tengku Razaleigh and the S46 members joining Umno en masse. -- BERNAMA

AH JK