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Dr M to meet Ghapur to discuss resignation

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he would meet Merotai Assemblyman Datuk Abdul Ghapur Salleh this week to find out why he had resigned as Sabah's Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister.

"I will meet him this week. Until today, I don't know the reason why he resigned. I want to know if he has a reason," he said during the Asean Informal Summit here.

Asked whether the resignation would affect the rotation system for the Chief Ministership in Sabah, Dr Mahathir said he could not tell yet. "We have to find out why he resigned first."

Asked how he felt about Ghapur's resignation, the Prime Minister replied: "I don't know what I feel because I don't know why he resigned."

Ghapur, who is on leave, announced his resignation last Saturday, citing "personal problems" and failure to perform his duties entrusted to him.

His resignation as Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister would take effect on the last day of his leave on Thursday, while his resignation as Sabah Umno deputy chief took effect on Sunday.

In Tamparuli, Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee said Ghapur's resignation would be discussed at the weekly State Cabinet meeting tomorrow.

He said he had communicated with Dr Mahathir and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim on Ghapur's resignation but declined to elaborate.

On whether Ghapur's resignation had jeopardised the image of the State Barisan Nasional, he said:

"His resignation has certainly given rise to some speculation but I am sure when the dust has settled it would appear that the image of the State BN has remained intact," he said.

Meanwhile, Sabah Umno acting secretary Datuk Masidi Manjun called on local Umno leaders to refrain from making "speculative" statements about Ghapur's resignation.

He said if there was a need to make statements, it must reflect the political maturity of Umno leaders.

He said Umno members should place their full confidence in the party president, his deputy and in State Umno liaison chief Datuk Osu Sukam to handle the matter.

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