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Mahathir-Fokker

MAHATHIR SAYS M'SIA IS STUDYING PROPOSAL ON FOKKER RESCUE

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight confirmed that Malaysia is studying a proposal on the possible rescue of the bankrupt Dutch aircraft maker NV Fokker.

"We are looking at it, if it is feasible or viable, yes," he said when commenting on an Asian Wall Street Journal (AWSJ) report today saying that Malaysia has emerged as the latest potential saviour for the bankrupt company.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, at a separate function, said Khazanah Holdings Bhd, the investment arm of the government, was looking at the proposal and had not made any decision on the matter.

Dr Mahathir however said: "This thing has not materialised yet. It may not happen but of course we are looking at it."

The Prime Minister was asked about the issue after he and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, attended the Malaysia Inc Hari Raya gathering, here.

The AWSJ report quoted senior government officials as saying that the Malaysian government, through Khazanah Holdings, was studying a proposal to rescue Fokker with a group of international partners.

Dr Mahathir also said the Malaysian government was approached regarding the matter before the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration.

Asked whether a certain deadline had been given for the Malaysian government to come back with an answer, he said: "Not actually a deadline...for a limited time I think we can study (it)."

On whether the national car manufacturer Proton was involved, he said it had nothing to do with Proton.

He also said so far no estimation was made on the amount of money involved in the proposed plan.

Anwar said that Malaysia was still studying the proposal on the possible rescue through Khazanah Holdings.

"There is no clear commitment yet on the matter because the proposal is only still being discussed," he told reporters after attending a Kongsi Raya function organised by Umno Youth and three other organisations at the Mines Wonderland in Sungai Besi here tonight.

The other organisations are the Malaysian Youth Council, the Malaysian Young Entrepreneurs Association and the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement. --

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