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PM hopes Abu Zahar will carry out his duties well

LONDON, Fri: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad hopes the new Chief Minister of Malacca, Datuk Abu Zahar Isnin, will carry out his duties well.

Pointing out that there is tremendous power vested in the Chief Minister, he stressed that the power should be used judiciously, wisely, sincerely and not be misused.

The State Government in Malacca is a Barisan Nasional Government and it is very important that there be close cooperation with the Federal Government.

"We find that some states, even though led by Barisan Nasional governments, have their own stands and are different from the Federal Government," he said.

Asked to elaborate, he said there are some differences between some states and the Federal Government with regard to Islamic laws and there is also a tendency to repossess land for purposes other than development.

When the Government made it easier for land to be acquired for development purposes, some state governments acquired land in order to resell it and to make profit for themselves, which is wrong.

"That is why we have to again revise the land laws.

"We try to do things that we think is good for the people but state governments sometimes only see the advantage given to them. We hope that we can coordinate. The state governments need to ensure that their policies are in line with Federal policies," he added.

Asked about the emphasis on "clean leaders", Dr Mahathir said, "not only should they be clean, but they should also be seen to be clean. And that is very important. We do not want candidates that are clean but seen not to be so".

In Malacca, Bernama reports that Abu Zahar, 57, was sworn in as the eighth Malacca Chief Minister at Istana Melaka in Ayer Keroh today. He received his letter of appointment from Yang Di-Pertua Negeri Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabudin at about 4.05pm.

Abu Zahar said his appointment is a trust that he aims to discharge with full responsibility.

He replaces Datuk Seri Mohamed Zin Abdul Ghani who died on May 14 following a stroke. Abu Zahar was also appointed state Umno liaison chairman.

Abu Zahar said he appreciates the confidence shown by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, and promised to give his best. He also pledged a clean, efficient, trustworthy and quality administration to bring the state to greater heights.

Abu Zahar is the State Assemblyman for Merlimau and head of the Jasin Umno division since 1990.

He was State Assembly Speaker for two terms from 1986 before his appointment as state executive councillor in charge of the works and public utilities portfolio in 1994.

Abu Zahar became fully involved in politics in 1986 after retiring as principal assistant director of the state schools registration unit.

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