

16 MAY 1997

Zin - successor

SELANGOR FORMULA FOR MELAKA?

MELAKA, May 16 (Bernama) -- The question of whether Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will apply the Selangor formula to Melaka in choosing the successor to the late Datuk Seri Mohd Zin Abdul Ghani as the Chief Minister has become the topic of conversation among the people.

In the Selangor case, the potential successor chosen was a Selangor leader at the federal level.

Political analysts here said if Dr Mahathir could nominate former Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar to succeed former Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhd Taib, there was no reason the same thing could not happen in Melaka.

If so, Melaka Umno leaders at the federal level too would have the chance to be nominated as Mohd Zin's successor apart from members of the Melaka State Executive Council and Melaka State Legislative Assembly.

They are Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam who is also Batu Berendam MP, Alor Gajah MP Datuk Abu Seman Yusop and Jasin MP Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba.

Again, based on the Selangor formula Mohd Ali seemed to be the most likely candidate. Apart from being an MP and holding a federal post, he is also deputy chairman of the Melaka Umno Liaison Committee, just like Abu Hassan.

When posed the question of Mohd Zin's successor yesterday, Dr Mahathir said that since he would be going on a two-month leave soon, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as acting Prime Minister would have "full power" to decide on the matter.

Asked if he would also appoint a federal minister just as he did for Selangor, in jest he said he would shock everyone by appointing a journalist to the post.

But, another potential candidate is former Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby whose political come back had been widely speculated.

And many felt that he would be given another chance.

If so, there would be two possible course of actions -- first Abdul Rahim will contest the Melekek state by-election to succeed Mohd Zin.

Second, he will contest Batu Berendam parliamentary seat to succeed Abu Hassan as Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister while Mohd Ali moves to Melekek to succeed Mohd Zin as Melaka Chief Minister.

But, there are also other qualified state leaders and Dr Mahathir might just revert to the traditional practice of appointing the Chief Minister from among them, like he did to Mohd Zin when Abdul Rahim resigned.

Of the eight Exco members, six are from Umno and they are Datuk Sahar Arpan, Datuk Yasin Shariff, Datuk Abu Zahar Isnin, Datuk Mo'min Abdul Aziz, Datuk Ibrahim Durum and Datuk Nordin Yaani. Two other Exco members are from the MCA.

But, three of them are reportedly under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) for alleged abuse of power, corruption and other malpractices.

But again Dr Mahathir does not likes others to speculate on what he thinks, said a political analyst Prof Madya Mahadzir Md Khir recently.

Participating in an Umno forum on May 11, Mahadzir said the Prime Minister had on many occasions proved the speculations wrong.

There some truth to it as in the Selangor case when Dr Mahathir chose Abu Hassan as Muhammad's successor instead of an Exco member as many had

wanted to belief, including the media and political analysts.

-- BERNAMA

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