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Mahathir-MCA

KOH TO MEET DR M OVER MCA'S REQUESTS FOR DCM, EXTRA EXCO SEAT

PORT KLANG, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon will meet him next week to discuss MCA's requests for a deputy chief minister's post and an extra exco seat in the state government.

The Prime Minister hoped the issue would be resolved after the meeting.

"Be patient, the matter will be resolved soon," he told a media conference at the West Port Business Centre here.

He earlier visited the world's biggest container vessel "Clifford Maersk" which called at the West Port here today as part of its Far East tour.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik also briefed Dr Mahathir on Port Klang's operations.

Ling, who is also MCA president, refused to comment on the matter when approached by reporters later.

The Star front-paged a report today that MCA grassroots members want the state party leadership to pull out from the Gerakan-led state government following talk that the MCA would not be given greater representation.

The report said the members felt that MCA should not participate in the state government if the party, which won all nine state seats it contested in the recent general election, was not given more responsibilities to shoulder.

It also said Ling would hold an emergency meeting today with Pulau Pinang MCA leaders who are said to be considering the "pull out" proposal.

Gerakan with eight seats holds the Chief Minister's post and has three state executive councillors.

Dr Mahathir also said he agreed with Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob who had reportedly issued a warning to state executive councillors in the state that they would be dropped if they failed to measure up to expectations.

The Prime Minister said it was a normal thing as the government only wanted people who could work to be in the administration.

It was reported today that Adnan gave Pahang state executive councillors between six months and a year to make their mark and anyone found not up to par would be replaced.

Dr Mahathir also said the government was finding ways to check the abuse of mosques by certain groups to spread lies.

"Mosques are places for us to worship (God) and to forge brotherhood among fellow Muslims but instead they have been abused to hurl slanders, make all sorts of baseless accusations including alleging that Malaysia has ties with Israel," he said.

Replying to a question, Dr Mahathir said he was confident that Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman was capable of dealing with such matters.

-- BERNAMA

AZH TS