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Mahathir-puppets

OPPOSITION RECEIVING FOREIGN HELP ARE PUPPETS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUCHING, Nov 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government will only expose the opposition as puppets if they really receive financial aid and support from foreigners.

He said there is no law at present that prevents political parties from receiving foreign assistance.

"But if they break the law, we will take action," he told reporters after ending his visit here, accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

They arrived from Kota Kinabalu last night and continued their national tour to Johor Baharu.

Dr Mahathir expressed regret that if it is true such thing occurred, then it showed foreign interference in the internal affairs of this country.

He was asked to comment on call by the Umno Youth today to ask the government to investigate attempts allegedly made by high commissions and embassies in the country to provide financial assistance and support to opposition politicians and non-governmental organisations in the general election.

On performance of the Sarawak Barisan Nasional (BN) in the parliamentary election, Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that the state could record a major victory.

He said Sarawak did not face much problem in the election.

"I notice that the opposition parties are not that active. I'm confident that we can achieve a major victory in Sarawak," he said.

He was also confident that Sarawak and Sabah would contribute significantly to the BN victory in the 10th general election.

He said Sarawak was expected to contribute at least 26 of the 28 parliamentary seats contested.

"(In fact) it's not impossible for us to have a clean sweep in Sarawak. They say they can deliver," he said.

Dr Mahathir also expressed confidence of the BN maintaining its two-thirds majority. "I am sure of that," he said.

Asked about PAS'intention to implement the Hudud law in Kelantan if the party was again returned to power in this election, he said many people in Kelantan had fled the state to work elsewhere.

"If they implement the PAS version of Hudud, many more will run away," he said.

He said the people in Kelantan would also realise that PAS did not bring much progress, only interested in hurting people by inventing the hudud law.

On report that some employers were reluctant to give their workers a paid holiday on polling day, Dr Mahathir said the government had declared it as a public holiday.

As such, if they asked the workers to work, then they must be prepared to pay them more as provided under the law, he said.

The workers also had the right to take legal action against their employers for not paying them more for working on a public holiday, he said.

--BERNAMA

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