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Mahathir-Banks

BANK MANagements ALSO RESPONSIBILE FOR INFO LEAK, SAYS PM

ALOR SETAR, March 17 (Bernama) -- Bank managements should take some responsibility for the actions of staff who leak information on transactions by individuals and the government to the public, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The prime minister said the bank managements should safeguard their performance and image so that their credibility would not be questioned,

Bank employees on their part must understand the banking laws, practices and ethics, he told reporters at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport at the end of a three-day visit to Kedah.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on the call by the National Union of Bank Employees (Nube) for the Melaka government to reconsider its decision to withdraw its fixed deposits from two commercial banks.

Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Wira Ali Rustam has claimed that employees of the two banks -- Bank Islam Malaysia and Bumiputra Commercial Bank -- openly showed support for the opposition.

Dr Mahathir said bank employees must know that that they should keep all transactions confidential.

"If the bank staff do not understand these matters, they are not fit to work in banks and the banks cannot be trusted," he said.

Clients would then stop dealing with the banks resulting in the banks' business being affected, he said.

"If bank employees are bent on showing their opposition to the government openly, the government cannot trust them anymore.

"Do you expect us to trust people who say 'we are not loyal to the government'," said the prime minister.

Asked if Bank Negara would take action against the two banks, Dr Mahathir said that was for the central bank itself to decide.

"The government is only interested in its dealings with the banks. It is the customer's right to choose to deal with any bank," he said.

Elaborating on his speech at an Aidiladha gathering at the Kampung Paya Sena mosque grounds in Pendang earlier today, Dr Mahathir said ulamas should explain to the people the true meaning of sacrifice.

"Sacrifice is not limited to slaughtering cattle and distributing the meat, and the people must be prepared to sacrifice by forgoing things they really liked for the future good," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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