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Mahathir-MT

NOT ENOUGH SEATS TO APPOINT ALL MBS TO SUPREME COUNCIL, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he could not appoint all the menteri besar to the Umno supreme council because of the limited seats.

He said he had to give consideration to others like the women and those who had contributed to the council.

"We do not have many seats, only 10, we want to give to others too," he told reporters after opening an international seminar and dialogue on enhancing understanding of Islam for the media, here.

He was asked to comment on the appointments of 10 Umno supreme council members, announced today, which did not include Selangor Menteri Besar Selangor Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar and Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Umno president, said women got more representation in the appointments because they were not chosen during the recent party elections.

"We want also some people who are Umno members or sympathetic towards Umno but would never be able to be elected by Umno... so they can contribute also," he said.

The prime minister said Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam was appointed as a supreme council member because Sabah was a powerful Umno supporter and needed a representation at that level.

On the appointment of Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, Dr Matahir said Musa was a newcomer who could contribute to the party.

"He is not an activist, he did not contest, but then he is holding a very important portfolio," he said.

The list of appointed Umno supreme council members was announced in a statement by party secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

Three women who were appointed are former Wanita chief Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman, Bank Rakyat chairman and member of the National Economic Action Council Dr Norraesah Mohamad and lawyer Azlina Othman.

-- BERNAMA

AFY AHH JK