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Mahathir-Appointment

MAHATHIR DEFENDS APPOINTMENT OF GANI PATAIL AS ATTORNEY-GENERAL

PUTRAJAYA, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the new Attorney-General, Datuk Abdul Gani Patail, should be given a chance to prove himself.

The prime minister said it was unfair to criticise Abdul Gani's appointment without seeing his performance.

Speaking to reporters at his Hari Raya open house in Seri Perdana, here, he said although some parties had questioned Abdul Gani ability to discharge his duties as Attorney-general, it was only a personal view.

He was commenting on a news report last Friday that the Bar Council had expressed its concern over the appointment of Abdul Gani in a letter to the prime minister.

The council was reported to said in the letter that the Attorney-General should be a person who could command respect.

Abdul Gani was appointed Attorney-General effective Jan 1 next year.

He succeeds Datuk Seri Ainum Mohamed Saaid who retired before completing her term because of health problem.

Asked whether he had received the letter from the Bar Council, Dr Mahathir said he had not seen it.

He said that those protesting Abdul Gani's appointment might have links with political parties.

He also said that there was bound to differences of opinion on the appointment of Abdul Gani.

"Well, this are a matter of opinion. You say there are more qualified people. Other people (would) say that Gani is qualified. What is to determine who is qualified?"

Dr Mahathir also commented on the issue raised in the letter by the Bar Council on the Federal Court judgment in the contempt case of lawyer Zainur Zakaria which had touched on the conduct of Abdul Gani.

"This is a high profile case, nearly all the prosecution witnesses, including the police, were labelled as bad people, including the judge who was heavily criticised.

"I feel that the Bar Council should not be influenced by views that are obviously political-based," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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