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Mahathir-MCA

MAHATHIR WANTS ANOTHER MEETING WITH ONG TO RESOLVE MCA DISPUTE

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he wants to meet MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Kiat again to help find a solution to the crisis in the party.

"I hope I will meet Tee Kiat again," the Prime Minister told reporters after opening Permodalan Nasional Berhad's PNB Darby Park service apartments here tonight.

He said this when asked to comment on the internal dispute in the MCA including on the party's move on Thursday to suspend its youth wing central committee headed by Ong.

Dr Mahathir said he had before this met Ong and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik in connection with the crisis but both of them appeared reluctant to compromise and resolve differences.

Dr Mahathir described as serious the dispute between the two factions -- one led by Dr Ling and the other by deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek with Ong's support.

The Prime Minister, who is Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said it was important that the crisis be resolved especially as the MCA was the second biggest party in the BN.

He, however, added that he could only give advise on the matter while further efforts were beyond his authority.

On the possibility that the dispute would affect the BN's chances in the by-elected expected in Indera Kayangan soon, Dr Mahathir said he was confident that the coalition would be able to prepare well for the contest.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said did not see the need to set up a special tribunal to investigate the issue of racial segregation in schools.

He said the issue could be resolved administratively as it was not the government's policy to stream students according to race.

The Prime Minister said the government was always in a difficult situation with regard to such matters.

When it advocated one same school for students of all races, there was strong objection, and there would also be objections if the government sought to stream students according to race.

The National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) claims many schools were streaming pupils according to race.

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad last Thursday directed his officers to carry out immediate investigations into the claim.

-- BERNAMA

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