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Mokhzani: No immediate plans for future

Farush Khan; Ainon Mohd
KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir (picture), who announced his withdrawal from the corporate scene on Thursday, today said he had no immediate plans for the future, but is considering a few options.

"I want to spend more time with my family before deciding what to do next," he said in an interview at his house today.

During the hour-long interview, Mokhzani answered all questions posed to him. They included the reasons in relinguishing his stake in Tongkah Holdings and Pantai Holdings, his predicament as the Prime Minister's son and his views on politics. His wife Mastisa and his third and youngest child, Mahathir, 1 1/2, were with him throughout the interview.

Mokhzani hit out at those using the Internet and other means to tarnish the image of the Government and its leaders.

"I hope people can see what is truly happening in Malaysia. Don't be too emotional when making decisions or jump to conclusions."

No matter how much is being done to tarnish the image of the Government, he said, the people would know "who is telling the truth and who is lying".

"Efforts are made to ridicule our country by those who live here. This is something I don't understand."

Among the "many reasons" he decided to quit as chief executive officer of Pantai Holdings and Tongkah were allegations of "how and what kind of businesses we (Pantai and Tongkah) get into". The assumptions, he said, are that the Government is being unduly favourable to the companies he controlled.

"By that they mean we have been getting contracts, special treatment and whatnot, none of which is true," said the assistant treasurer of Umno Youth.

On criticism which likened his involvement in business to that of the son of former Indonesian President Tommy Suharto, he said: "With due respect to the government of our neighbouring country and how it administers that country, I think everything is given to the family ... privatisation, monopolies. You can't see that happening here at all."