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Mahathir-Appointments

NO MESSAGE IN APPOINTMENT OF SENATORS FOR POSTS, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 21 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today there is no message in his decision to choose non-MPs for four of the five government administration appointments announced last week.

"There is no message. You (media) can come out with your own message," the Prime Minister said.

He said he took into account certain considerations before appointing members of the government administration.

"That's why I sometimes appoint elected representatives but sometimes am forced to choose those who have yet to become an MP and give them a seat in the Senate (for this purpose).

"Perhaps one day they too need to contest (in the general election). This is not something new, we have done this before too," he told reporters at the air force base in Subang upon arrival from a four-day working visit to Osaka, Japan.

Dr Mahathir was asked about Wednesday's appointment of one non-MP (Brig-Gen [Rtd] Abdul Hamid Zainal Abidin) as a minister, two others (Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor and Datuk M.Kayveas) as deputy ministers and another (Datuk Zainuddin Maidin) as parliamentary secretary.

Abdul Hamid will be made a senator before joining the Cabinet while the three others are already senators.

On the possibility of the appointment of non-MPs having a demoralising effect on MPs, the Prime Minister said: Politicians don't need to feel demoralised. Maybe it's the press that puts the idea. You now make them demoralised, after you ask.

Asked if there would be further Cabinet changes, he said in jest that the media would not be happy until that happened.

"The press is not happy as long as we don't dismiss people. What they want is for me to chuck out the whole Cabinet and then look for others to fill the Cabinet," he said.

In a more serious tone, Dr Mahathir said Cabinet changes should not be treated as a game.

"This is not a game that we play. A change doesn't mean that the new person is better than the old one.

"Change is not always for the better, we don't make a change for the sake of changing. We have a certain objective, that's why we make the change," he said.

The Prime Minister said in other countries it might be common for Cabinet members to be removed for the slightest of mistakes.

"But even after the change, it remain the same. Nothing new happens. Just because you change the leadership doesn't mean that you are going to get a better man," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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