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Mahathir-Terengganu

SACKING OF TATI CEO CRUEL, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

PORT DICKSON, Dec 31 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today described the sacking of the chief executive officer of the Terengganu Advanced Technical Institute (Tati), Prof Dr Mohamed Zaki Abdul Muin, as cruel.

The prime minister said it was cruel to hire a new worker and then to fire him without giving him a hearing or asking him to show cause.

If the Barisan Nasional (BN) government had acted like this, the opposition would have accused it of various things including cruelty, he told reporters after attending a passing-put parade of army recruits at the Army Basic Training Centre (Pusasda) here.

He said that when the PAS government was in power in Terengganu, it had no pity for those who opposed it.

"(When the BN was in power) we still paid their (those who opposed BN) salaries, kept them in the government but when it (PAS) came into power, there's no sympathy, dismiss at any chance, cut off," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on the sacking of Dr Mohamaed Zaki on 24-hour notice by the Terengganu PAS government last Thursday for allegedly disobeying its directives, including not handing over the special payment channelled by the federal government to Tati.

Asked on the Terengganu government's directive to all educational institutions in the state which receive the special payment from the federal government to hand over the money to it, Dr Mahathir said this showed that the state government was under pressure.

On the selection of the BN candidate for the Indera Kayangan state by-election in Perlis, he said: "I have not been given the list of candidates yet. When I get it, I will decide."

On the New Year celebration tomorrow, he said he hoped that 2002 would be a better year than 2001.

"The year 2001 had many problems. We will not have another year like 2001. I hope that 2002 will be better for all of us, including the reporters and the press," he said.

-- BERNAMA

APG SBS JK