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Mahathir-Kelantan

UP TO THE KELANTAN SULTAN TO WHETHER OR NOT GIVE HIS ASSENT, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, July 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that it is up to the Sultan of Kelantan to whether or not give his assent to the proposed amendments to the state constitution to curtail his powers and functions as the ruler of the state.

"It is up to him...if he does not give his assent, it (the amendment bill) will have no effect," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the intention of the PAS-led Kelantan government to amend the state constitution was different from the federal government's amendment of the federal constitution pertaining to the state rulers in 1993.

"We initiated it with a different intention, not over petty issues like trying to get even. We did not have revenge in mind.

"We only wanted to have it (constitutional amendment) to protect the people in the event of actions which are against the law committed by the rulers but this (amendment bill) is not for that matter...it has a different intention," he said after presenting prizes to the winners of Tenaga Nasional Berhad's international equestrian championship 2001 here.

The prime minister was commenting on a statement by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah yesterday that the Sultan of Kelantan will not give his assent to the amendment bill passed by the state assembly on June 25.

Dr Mahathir questioned the move for the proposed amendment as it was initiated only now instead of during the amendment to the federal constitution in 1993.

"If they have the same intention as us, to curb any criminal actions by the rulers, they would have already passed the bill a long time ago. Why passed the bill only now...there is a different intention," he said.

Asked on the procedure now as compared to 1993, Dr Mahathir said: "The procedure in terms of legislating is the same...bills are passed by the state assembly but they must have the assent of the rulers.

"And we have already done it...our intention is not to get even. Our intention is to curb criminal actions by the rulers."

-- BERNAMA

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