

Leave party matters to the parties: PM

Amendments made so that govt and courts do not intervene

By R. Manirajan

KLANG, Thurs: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Or Mahathir Mohamad said today amendments to laws concerning political parties were made so that the government and the courts do not intervene in party matters.

He said that in 1988, when Umno was declared illegal, the laws were amended so that political party matters could be decided by the party itself and not by the government or the court.

Mahathir, who is also the Barisan Nasional chairman, was asked to comment on the problems faced by MCA's 261 new branches which are in a limbo as to whether they can hold their election following objections from other factions in the party.

"So, if that is the case, we must see why they can't participate. We may not like it, but the fact is the law says that affairs of political parties are not subject to government's or the courts' intervention," he said at a press conference after launching the first Malaysian-made crane at Favelle Favco Cranes (M) Sdn Bhd.

Commenting on assurances by the party leadership that the new branches are legal, and comments by another faction that they are illegal and that phantom members exist in the branches, Mahathir said "if the other faction can prove it is illegal, they (phantom members) should be thrown out."

On the Ketari by-election, Mahathir said "things are going on smoothly".

He said that since PAS now supports DAP, "therefore they (PAS) are now against the formation of an Islamic state as DAP objects to it more so now because they are helping DA!?"