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Umno-Mustapa

NO TRUTH IN REPORT TO OUST MUSTAPA, SAYS DR NIK MOHD

KOTA BAHARU, March 30 (Bernama) -- There is no truth in the newspaper report that 12 Umno division chiefs held a meeting here on March 16 to remove Kelantan Umno chief Datuk Mustapa Mohamed from his post, a division leader said today.

Pengkalan Chepa Umno division head Dr Nik Mohd Zain Omar said there had been no discussions whatsoever among Umno circles in the state to remove Mustapa.

He said the division chiefs did hold the meeting but they merely discussed preparations for the general election.

"We only deliberated on the work to be done to ensure the Barisan Nasional (BN) wrested Kelantan from PAS.

"There was no discussion at all on toppling Mustapa or changing the state liaison chief," he told BERNAMA when commenting on the front-page report in the New Straits Times yesterday that 12 of the 14 Umno division chiefs in Kelantan were seeking to replace the party's state office bearers.

The report said on March 16, barely hours after attending a State Umno liaison meeting, the 12 division heads gathered for dinner at the residence of a colleague from southern Kelantan.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday dismissed the report as mere speculation.

"The report is baseless and not true," said Dr Nik Mohd Zain who attended the meeting.

"Let me say here that I'm proud of the present chairman (Mustapa). Why do we need to change him. He has the blessings of the Prime Minister," he said.

Dr Nik Mohd Zain said the issue to remove Mustapa was played up by certain quarters as they were jealous with Umno's success in turning over the people to support the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the next general election.

He said of late Umno has been the choice of opposition party members in Kelantan as evident from their applications to join the party.

Recently, more than 600 PAS and Keadilan members from Rantau Panjang and Pengkalan Chepa embraced Umno, he said.

On the meeting in question, Dr Nik Mohd Zain said on March 16 all the 14 division heads attended the State Umno liaison committee meeting chaired by Mustapa at the state Umno headquarters building.

In conjunction with the meeting, Kuala Krai division head Datuk Wan Zaid Wan Abdullah held a reception in his house which was attended by all the division heads except Mustapa (Jeli) and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (Gua Musang).

"At the meeting, no one talked about toppling Mustapa," he added.

-- BERNAMA

MNR RAR TS