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Zainuddin-Rafidah

ZAM ADVISES RAFIDAH TO APOLOGISE TO DR MAHATHIR

SUNGAI PETANI, July 18 (Bernama) -- The Minister of International Trade and Industry, Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz has been advised to make a public apology to former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad concerning her "rather discourteous" statement on the issue of approved permits (APs) for vehicles recently.

Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin said today Rafidah should seek Dr Mahathir's apology before the 56th Umno general assembly in Kuala Lumpur which starts tomorrow night.

"Datuk Seri Rafidah was found to have given a reply which had offended Dr Mahathir when the former Prime Minister suggested that the names of those given APs be publicised in detail," he told reporters after opening the Bukit Selambau mini post office, near here.

He said this when asked whether the issue over the APs would be raised at the general assembly this time.

Zainuddin said he was disappointed because Rafidah had disclosed that Tun Dr Mahathir's son himself owned APs to import Porsche cars whereas the minister had explained that the government would not publicise the names of AP holders as it was not government policy and had never been done before.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Proton Advisor, recently expressed fear over the excessive issuance of the APs to the extent that the national automotive industry was being jeopardised.

The APs are issued by the International Trade and Industry Ministry to enable CBU (completely built unit) cars to be imported into the country. Out of the existing 116 AP holders in the country, 31 are sole franchise holders for the import and distribution of foreign cars.

In the federal capital today, Rafidah said she hoped the letter she sent to Dr Mahathir recently would resolve the issues raised by the former Prime Minister.

"To me...it (the matter) is resolved, because everything had been explained, clearly and in detail. I hope that with the explanation, (the matter) won't be raised again," she said referring to the issues involving her and her ministry which had been questioned by Dr Mahathir.

-- BERNAMA

MAN MAI AO