

Mohd Shafie Advises BN Leaders, Members To Stay Calm Over Terengganu Political Developments

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IPOH, May 13 (Bernama) -- An Umno vice-president today called on Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders and members to remain calm over the political developments in Terengganu, saying the coalition is still in power in the state.

Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal said the BN members should support the new Terengganu menteri besar, Datuk Ahmad Razif Abdul Rahman, to strengthen the BN government in the state.

"According to the constitution, we (BN) are still the government there and there is already a replacement menteri besar. As long as there is no notice from the state legislative assembly or the ruler, the situation is still OK," he told reporters after a meeting with Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir at the latter's official residence here.

Mohd Shafie was asked to comment on the resignation of three Terengganu assemblymen, including former menteri besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Said, from Umno to become independent elected representatives.

The resignations of Ahmad, Ajil assemblyman Ghazali Taib and Bukit Besi assemblyman Roslee Daud from Umno have left the Terengganu legislative assembly with 14 representatives from the BN, 14 from PAS, one from PKR and three independents.

The change of Menteri Besar in Terengganu was not a spur-of-the-moment decision as Ahmad pledged to step down as the menteri besar one year after his reappointment in May last year so as to enable the new menteri besar to strengthen the BN in Terengganu where the coalition had only secured 17 of the 32 seats in the legislative assembly.

Ahmad had reached a gentleman's agreement to step down, but seems to have gone back on his word and is holding the government to ransom.

Mohd Shafie said the BN government continued to administer Terengganu with its 14 assemblymen and the speaker of the assembly.

He said Ahmad who was also the State Assemblyman for Kijal, as well as Ajil State Assemblyman Ghazali Taib and Bukit Besi Assemblyman Roslee Daud had still not taken their stands whether to support BN or not.

"There must be clarification...it does not mean when they are independent, that they support the opposition. There must be clarification or information to the palace, only then will the palace be confident that the situation has been acknowledged," he said.

On the understanding between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Ahmad on the latter's resignation as Terengganu Menteri Besar, Shafie said it had existed since a year ago.

"There was an understanding between the Prime Minister and Ahmad Said at the early stage, which is meant to extend his (Ahmad Said's) appointment as Terengganu Menteri Besar.

"At that time, there was upheaval in Terengganu, the situation was quite worrisome, some agreed some did not, to avoid the situation from continuing, it was agreed to extend for another year. I am convinced Ahmad Said understood the matter," he said.

On the rumours that the Terengganu State Assembly had been dissolved, he stressed that it was not true and asked the public not to easily believe information which had no credibility.

"The assumption is not true and has been denied by the Terengganu State Assembly Speaker (Mohd Zubir Embong). I am sure there will be people who will take this chance to do something to weaken BN's strength in Terengganu," he said.

Commenting on social networks which said the political crisis in Terengganu was similar to what previously happened in Perak, Shafie said the crisis in both states were different.

"It is different in Perak and Terengganu because in Terengganu, there was an understanding between the Prime Minister and the former Menteri Besar of Terengganu while in Perak, the crisis was between BN and the opposition," he said.

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