

Zahid Says Mahathir Did Right By Quitting Government-Linked Entities

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From Hafizah Kamaruddin

WASHINGTON, April 1 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said he feels that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has done the right thing by giving up the posts he held in entities associated with the government.

"It makes things difficult for the government when someone who is not aligned with it holds posts in its entities, even as an advisor," Ahmad Zahid, who is on a working visit to the United States, said to Malaysian journalists here Thursday night.

Dr Mahathir had resigned on Wednesday as chairman of Proton Holdings Bhd, chairman of Group Lotus Plc, chancellor of Universiti Teknologi Petronas, and advisor to Langkawi Development Authority and Tioman Island Development Authority.

Ahmad Zahid, who was replying to a question, said Dr Mahathir's resignations showed that he understood what needed to be done when he longer supported the government.

On March 11, the Cabinet decided to remove Dr Mahathir as adviser to Petronas.

Dr Mahathir had quit UMNO on Feb 29, citing loss of faith in the party.

Ahmad Zahid said that though Proton was not a government company, it was associated with the National Automotive Policy and would require technical and financial support from the government.

Asked about Dr Mahathir's position in the Perdana Leadership Foundation, Ahmad Zahid said there was no pressure on the former prime minister to quit as the honorary president.

In IPOH (Malaysia), UMNO Supreme Council member Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz said Dr Mahathir should have resigned from all posts he held in entities associated with the government before launching his verbal attacks against the government and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He also said that Dr Mahathir had failed yet again to topple Najib, this time by attempting to use the western media which he said was wrong and undemocratic.

Dr Mahathir was trying to get the support of the foreign press as his last attempt to bring down the government and Najib, he said when asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's interview with the 'Four Corners' programme of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

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