

Key officials in MACC, A-G dept to be determined by Parliamentary C'tee

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PUTRAJAYA, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- The powers of the government and prime minister in matters pertaining to the appointment of several key officials will be reduced through the establishment of the Special Parliamentary Committee, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the appointment of the top official of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the Auditor-General would be decided by the special committee after the proposal for its establishment had been agreed upon.

He said both the two positions were most important because they were closely related to matters pertaining to integrity and in ensuring that government management followed procedures, an important element in ensuring that efforts to curb corruption could be carried out.

"When the power of appointment is placed under the Special Parliamentary Committee, the government or prime minister can no longer interfere, in fact (they have) no power to take action, to mete out punishment or to demote the post of any official in the department concerned," he said.

Tun Dr Mahathir disclosed this at a media conference after chairing the Meeting of the Special Cabinet Committee On Anti-Corruption (JKKMAR) at the Perdana Putra Building, here today.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu and the Director-General of the National Centre for Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption (GIACC) Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed.

Dr Mahathir said previously the appointment of the top officials in the MACC and Auditor-General's Department was determined by the prime minister who would give his advice to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

The prime minister said with the shift of the power of appointment to the Special Parliamentary Committee, it would indirectly tighten the country's financial administration, thus reducing any possibility of bribery.

He said the special committee also had a role to play in taking action if there was any offence committed involving members from these agencies.

Dr Mahathir said the government was also prepared to undertake changes on any matter that required the support of two-thirds of the members of Parliament, including limiting the duration of the Prime Minister in holding office to only two terms.

"There are many more changes we are prepared to do but they required some time and at the moment we concentrate on efforts to reduce the power of the government and Prime Minister in the appointment of the members of the MACC and the Auditor-General,"he said.

On the mechanism to ensure that the members of government administration declared their assets, the Prime Minister said the move had already begun.

"We have prepared the forms to enable members of Parliament and the cabinet ministers to know what are the things that they have to declare,"he said.

At the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Government Management Integrity (JKKMAR) on June 8, the Prime Minister expressed commitment that the mechanism on the declaration of assets and giving of presents could be introduced immediately where the information, besides being provided to him, would also be given to the anti-corruption agency.

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