

# Malacca crisis 'practically solved' — Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The political problem in Malacca is 'practically solved,' Deputy Prime Minister Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir said today.

The group of 11 Assemblymen who sparked off a crisis in the State early last month have pledged to continue their respective duties as members of the National Front Government.

They met Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir at his office this afternoon to inform him of their agreement to abide by "all five decisions on Malacca

made at the Umno Supreme Council meeting on Sept. 9."

The Assemblymen, eight from Umno and three from MCA, had petitioned Datuk Hussein Onn to remove Chief Minister Haji Abdul Ghani Ali for alleged "mismanagement" of the State.

Datuk Hussein had subsequently told them to be patient. He appointed Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir to head an Umno Special Committee to in-

vestigate the issue.

The Sept. 9 meeting discussed the Special Committee's report and decided on the following steps:

- Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir to assume duties as chairman of the Malacca Umno Liaison Committee, taking over from Haji Abdul Ghani;

- The Chief Minister, State Executive Council members, and the other Umno Assemblymen to continue their respective duties as members of the

Malacca National Front Government;

- The four Umno divisions in the State were suspended, each to be run by an Administrative Committee headed by a Supreme Council representative;

- The above decisions would be effective until such time to be determined by the Umno Supreme Council; and

- The State liaison committee would decide on Umno's stand on all related issues.

The Assemblymen had objected to "one of the decisions." Datuk

Hussein had during the same meeting advised the group "to think it over."

On Sept. 23 the eight Umno Assemblymen met Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir and Umno secretary-general Datuk Senu Abdul Rahman to discuss further, it is now believed, the conditions for them to accept the Supreme Council's moves in their entirety.

They were given assurances that it would be in the interest of the people and the State to drop the allegations.

The eight agreed, and Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir told them that it would be better for the 11 to make a joint declaration.

Even though MCA members are not technically obliged to abide by the directives of the Umno Supreme Council, the Deputy Prime Minister said the three MCA members adhered "to the decisions."

A Press statement issued by the 11 Assemblymen after today's meeting gave the following reasons for their willingness to accept a compromise: (They had less than two weeks ago declared that they would accept "nothing less than Haji Ghani's resignation.")

- The Supreme Council understood the Assemblymen's actions had a proper basis and were righteous;

- The development projects which gave rise to the group's "feeling of dissatisfaction" would be reviewed. They hoped the Government would rectify their implementation "under the direct supervision of Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir;"

- The Government's New Economic Policy would be implemented successfully in the State without affecting the position of Haji Abdul Ghani, who would in any case have to seek the approval of the state UMNO liaison committee before taking significant and important steps;

- The Supreme Council would ensure that Haji Abdul Ghani would not repeat "similar actions", which could "give rise to other crises;" and

Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir also confirmed today he would be meeting the chairmen of the various divisional administrative committees tomorrow.