

NO36: (F)  
MAHATHIR-MB

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT. 19 (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CONFIRMED THAT PAHANG MENTRI BESAR HAJI ABDUL RAHIM ABU BAKAR WOULD BE GOING TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS A MEMBER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION.

THE PRIME SAID HAJI RAHIM HAD BEEN TOLD THAT HE HAD BEEN SELECTED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK MUSA HITAM, WHILE HE (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR) WAS AWAY ON HOLIDAY IN IBERIA.

IN FACT, HE ADDED, A TELEGRAM HAD BEEN SENT TO THE MENTERI BESAR CONVEYING THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION ALTHOUGH HE HAD YET TO SEND OFFICIAL WORD ON THE MATTER.

+ I WILL GET CONFIRMATION FROM HIM SOON ON HIS DEPARTURE, + DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS HERE WHEN COMMENTING ON HAJI RAHIM'S STATEMENT THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN TOLD OFFICIALLY BY THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE WOULD BE A MEMBER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION.

HAJI RAHIM SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE IN HIS OFFICE AS PAHANG MENTERI BESAR UNTIL HE RECEIVED A DIRECTIVE FROM THE LEADERSHIP ON HIS GOING TO THE 36TH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

— BERNAMA MORE 1420/18

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE PAHANG UMNO LIAISON COMMITTEE, HOWEVER STRESSED THAT THE MENTERI BESAR WOULD NOT BE LEAVING TODAY AS REPORTED AS + I HAVE NOT FINALISED ALL THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS ON HIS GOING. +

HE SAID THAT NATURALLY HE WOULD HAVE TO APPOINT SOMEONE TO ACT AS PAHANG MENTERI BESAR DURING HAJI RAHIM'S ABSENCE.

ASKE D WHETHER HAJI RAHIM'S DEPARTURE AMOUNTED TO SUBTLE TACTICS TO REMOVE HIM FROM OFFICE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID + I DON'T KNOW... IT'S ONLY PRESS SPECULATIONS. +

+ ALL THE GRIEVANCES ALLEGEDLY VOICED BY HAJI RAHIM ON HIS DEPARTURE TO NEW YORK WERE COMMUNICATED TO THE PRESS AND NOT TO ME, + HE ADDED.

SPECULATION IS RIFE THAT HAJI RAHIM WOULD RESIGN AND THAT HE WOULD NO LONGER BE THE MENTERI BESAR WHEN HE RETURNS IN THREE MONTHS TIME.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN REPORTED THAT HIS DEPARTURE IS IN FACT REMOVAL FROM OFFICE AS A RESULT OF PRESSURES FROM UMNO FACTIONS AND INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN THE STATE. — BERNAMA MORE 1435/18

NO38: (F)  
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ASKED WHETHER HAJI RAHIM WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS A CABINET MINISTER TO SOLVE THE CRISIS WHICH HAD BEEN GOING ON SINCE THE DAY HE WAS APPOINTED MENTERI BESAR IN 1978. DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID +IT MAY BE YOUR RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS+.

+WHEN I START THINKING, I WILL FIRST TELL THE UMNO MEMBERS,+ HE ADDED.

HE DID NOT FORESEE THE CRISIS AFFECTING THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS.

+I DON'T SEE OF THINGS HAPPENING THAT WILL HAVE ANY IMPACT ON THE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

ASKED WHETHER HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN HAJI RAHIM AS MENTERI BESAR. THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN ALL MENTRIS BESAR AND WHY SHOULD HE SINGLE OUT HAJI RAHIM.

HE SAID THAT AS LEADER OF THE PARTY, HE SHOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE ON ALL MENTRIS BESAR.

+I WILL ALSO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE NEXT MENTERI BESAR OF PAHANG IF A NEW APPOINTMENT IS MADE,+ HE ADDED, --- BERNAMA MORE 1440/1B

NO39: (F)  
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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR POINTED OUT THAT HAJI RAHIM'S POSITION AS MENTERI BESAR AND THAT AS A MEMBER OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL WERE TWO SEPARATE THINGS.

+A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE BY THE UMNO DELEGATES ON ELECTING HIM AS A MEMBER OF THE PARTY'S HIGHEST BODY BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT DECISION ALSO APPLIED TO HIM AS MENTERI BESAR.+

HAJI RAHIM EMERGED WITH THE SIXTH HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN THE CONTEST FOR THE 20 SEATS IN THE SUPREME COUNCIL IN THE PARTY'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN JUNE.

--- BERNAMA 1443/1B