

MAHATHIR-UMNO

KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 16 (BERNAMA) — UMNO DEPUTY PRESIDENT (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY +I SHALL GIVE MYSELF A CHANCE TO CONTEST THE PARTY'S NUMBER ONE POST IF DATUK HUSSEIN ONN IS DEFINITELY STEPPING DOWN.+

IN THE MEANTIME, HE HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION FOR THE PARTY'S NUMBER TWO POST AND HAD SENT THE PAPERS TO THE UMNO HEADQUARTERS.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER OPENING THE FOURTH MALAYSIAN HINDU SANGAM CONFERENCE HERE, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID SO FAR HE HAD STILL NOT RECEIVED THE NOMINATION PAPERS FOR THE POST OF UMNO PRESIDENT.

—BERNAMA MORE 1815//MK

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HE SAID IF DATUK HUSSEIN WAS REALLY STEPPING DOWN, AND IF HE WAS NOMINATED, HE WOULD +GIVE MYSELF A CHANCE TO CONTEST THE VACANT POST.+

ASKED IF HE WOULD BACK EITHER DATUK MUSA HITAM, OR TENGKU RAZALEIGH HAMZAM FOR THE NUMBER TWO POST, HE SAID: +I HAVE NO PREFERENCE. I CAN WORK WITH EITHER OF THEM OR ANYONE THE PARTY MEMBERS CHOOSE.+

+IT IS UP TO THE PARTY MEMBERS TO MAKE THEIR CHOICE.+

HOWEVER, IN CHOOSING LEADERS, HE ADVISED PARTY MEMBERS TO REMEMBER THAT IT SHOULD BE +BOTH IN THE INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PARTY.+ — BERNAMA MORE 1825/A1

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ON THE QUESTION OF A PARDON FOR THE FORMER SELANGOR MENTERI BESAR, DATUK HARUN IDRIS, HE SAID: +MY ROLE IN THIS WAS ONLY TO FORWARD A MEMORANDUM TO THE PARDONS BOARD.+

+I HAVE DONE THIS AND DO NOT KNOW THE OUTCOME AS I AM NOT A MEMBER OF THE BOARD.+

ASKED ABOUT THE GAZETTING OF THE RECENT AMENDMENTS TO THE SOCIETIES ACT, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID: +IT WILL BE DONE IN THE NORMAL PROCESS.+

+BUT ONE THING IS CLEAR: WE ARE NEITHER PUSHING NOR DELAYING IT.+

HE STRESSED THAT THE AMENDMENTS WERE NOT DESIGNED TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST OR VICTIMISE ANYONE. — BERNAMA 1835/A1