

MAHATHIR-COUNCIL
EM

84 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 26 (BERNAMA) - (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE INCLUSION OF NEW 'FACES IN THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL' REFLECTED THE DESIRE OF THE DELEGATES TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN THE YOUNG AND THE OLD IN THE PARTY.

THE "INFUSION" WAS A HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT, HE SAID, ADDING THAT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE YOUNGER DELEGATES WANTED PEOPLE OF THEIR GENERATION TO BE IN THE SUPREME COUNCIL AS SECOND ECHELON LEADERS.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT WAS ASKED BY REPORTERS HERE WHETHER HE WAS SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION FOR ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL ANNOUNCED THIS MORNING.

HE REPLIED: "THE QUESTION OF WHETHER I AM SATISFIED OR NOT DOES NOT ARISE. THE DELEGATES HAVE MADE THEIR CHOICE."

AS FOR THE FACT THAT ONLY ONE WOMAN HAD BEEN ELECTED AS AN ORDINARY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, HE SAID THAT THIS WAS UNAVOIDABLE CONSIDERING THE LARGE NUMBER OF TALENTED PEOPLE VYING FOR THE 20 SEATS. --MORE 1342/AJ

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HE WAS SURE THE DELEGATES HAD DIFFICULTY CHOOSING ONLY 20 OF THE 48 CONTENDERS +BECAUSE THERE WERE SO MANY GOOD CANDIDATES.+

ASKED ABOUT THE MINISTERS WHO LOST IN THE RACE, HE SAID: +THEIR FAILURE TO WIN A SEAT IN THE COUNCIL DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY AUTOMATICALLY HAVE TO RELINQUISH THEIR CABINET POST.+

ASKED WHEN HE WOULD RESHUFFLE HXS CABINET, HE WOULD ONLY SAY: +AT ANY TIME.+

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS ALSO ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE FACT THAT DEPUTY EDUCATION MINISTER DATUK KHALIL YAAKUB CAME OUT FIRST IN THE CONTEST FOR ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL.

HE SAID THAT EDUCATION WAS A PRESTIGIOUS PORTFOLIO AND ANYONE GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT WOULD BE POPULAR IF HE CARRIED OUT HIS DUTIES WELL. -- BERNAMA 1458/MB