

Mak's position: PM to decide later

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PETALING JAYA, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he must consider all factors before deciding on Labour Minister Datuk Mak Hon Kam's future in the Cabinet.

He said Datuk Mak's position would be discussed later, adding that he had to consult his friends and the new MCA leaders.

"Everything is possible. He may be in or he may be out," Dr Mahathir told reporters on his return from a nine-day visit to China.

Datuk Mak, the former acting MCA deputy president, did not contest in last Sunday's party elections in

which Mr Tan Koon Swan and his faction were elected to all the top posts.

Dr Mahathir cited to reporters the case of Datuk Hassan Adli Haji Arshad, a PAS leader who was retained in the Cabinet after PAS pulled out from the Barisan Nasional in 1977.

"He was in the Cabinet after he had ceased to be a member of any party," Dr Mahathir said.

"But I am not taking that into consideration."

Dr Mahathir said all factors must be taken into consideration, and not just one factor alone.

"Of course I will not be Prime Minister if I am not a

member of a party," he added.

Asked if it would be easier for him to fix the date for the general election now, he said: "Possibly, but it will still take place somewhere between now and April 1987."

On whether he will call for snap elections to get a fresh mandate in view of the economic situation, Dr Mahathir said: "I don't have snap elections."

Dr Mahathir said all kinds of things must be taken into consideration before a general election could be called. "So how to have a snap elections?"