

Mahathir: It's only speculation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today dismissed as "just speculation" a Jakarta news report on "the main reason" for Datuk Musa Hitam's decision to submit his resignation from both the Government and as deputy Umno president.

The news report, quoting political and diplomatic observers, said the reason for Datuk Musa's decision was because of the Prime Minister's continued retention of Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah in the Cabinet.

Asked to comment on it, Dr Mahathir replied: "It's just speculation."

According to Bernama, the Jakarta news report said the main reason for Datuk Musa submitting his resignation was the Prime Minister's refusal to accede to his demands to drop Tengku Razaleigh from the Ca-

binet.

(Datuk Musa defeated Tengku Razaleigh in the contest for the Umno deputy presidency in 1984).

It quoted political and diplomatic observers as saying that Datuk Musa had sent two letters to the Prime Minister over Tengku Razaleigh being retained in the Cabinet.

Ultimatum

The report said the first letter was sent just before the Cabinet reshuffle in 1984 in which Datuk Musa informed Dr Mahathir that he would have to reconsider his position in the Government and the party if Tengku Razaleigh was not dropped.

It said the second letter, sent after the Cabinet reshuffle, contained an ultimatum — Dr Mahathir was given until August last year to drop Tengku Razaleigh from the Cabinet or he would tender his resignation.

When asked about these letters at a Press conference following his visit to Airod Sendirian Berhad's aircraft facilities this morning, Dr Mahathir said: "I am not aware of these letters.

"Since they (the Indonesian newspapers) seem to know better than us, please ask them," he added.

On the reasons for Datuk Musa's resignation, the Prime Minister said: "I don't know the reason."

He also said he only read newspapers for the latest developments of the mission of the four Menteri Besar to London to coax Datuk Musa to reconsider his decision.

"I read the newspapers everyday. In some cases you know better than I do," he added.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said the party's Supreme Council had no plans to meet on Sunday, the day Datuk Musa's resignation takes effect.