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MAHATHIR-MUSA R'R'R'

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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 6 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK MUSA HITAM HAS DECLINED TO BE NOMINATED TO CONTEST IN THE COMING GENERAL ELECTION BECAUSE HE INTENDS TO RETIRE FROM POLITICS, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID THAT DATUK MUSA WAS ADAMANT IN HIS DECISION ALTHOUGH HE HAD HIMSELF TELEPHONED THE FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TO REQUEST HIM TO CONTEST IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

+HE IS NO LONGER INTERESTED IN POLITICS AND WISH TO CONTINUE HIS SERVICES TO THE NATION AS IN HIS PRESENT CAPACITY,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING AN UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING AT MENARA DATUK ONN, PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE HERE.

DATUK MUSA, 56, WAS APPOINTED THE COUNTRY'S SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE UNITED NATIONS LAST JANUARY. HE WAS THE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR KOTA TINGGI BEFORE THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID THAT DATUK MUSA'S NAME WAS IN THE FIRST LIST OF CANDIDATES BUT HAD BEEN DROPPED FOLLOWING HIS DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM POLITICS. -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE HAD HIMSELF TELEPHONED HIS FORMER DEPUTY IN NEW YORK AFTER DATUK MUSA HAD INFORMED JOHOR MENTERI BESAR TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN YASSIN THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO CONTEST IN THE GENERAL ELECTION.

+I HAD REQUESTED HIM TO CONTEST AND HE FLATLY REFUSED ... HE SAID THAT ANY AMOUNT OF PERSUASION WILL NOT MAKE HIM CHANGE HIS MIND,+ HE SAID.

ACCORDING TO HIM, DATUK MUSA HAD SAID THAT HE HAD NOT WANTED TO ISSUE ANY STATEMENT ON HIS DECISION EARLIER THAN THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE DATE OF THE GENERAL ELECTION BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT TO BE BOTHERED BY PLEAS FROM THOSE WHO WISHED HIM TO CONTEST.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE HAD ALSO ASKED DATUK MUSA REGARDING THE STATEMENT HE MADE FOLLOWING THE HIGH COURT'S DECISION ON HIS LIBEL SUIT AGAINST AUTHOR S.H. ALATTAS RELATING TO THE BOOK +SIAPA LAWAN SIAPA (CHALLENGER) THAT THE COURT'S DECISION WAS 'A NICE WRAP-UP FOR MY POLITICAL CAREER'.

HE SAID THAT DATUK MUSA HAD LEFT IT TO NEWSMEN TO MAKE THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION ON THE STATEMENT BECAUSE HE HAD NOT WANTED PLEAS TO BE MADE FOR HIS PRESENCE IN THE POLITICAL ARENA IF HE HAD MADE A STRAIGHTFORWARD STATEMENT AT THAT TIME. -- MORE

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ASKED IF THERE WERE OTHER ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAD INDICATED THEIR WISH NOT TO CONTEST IN THE GENERAL ELECTION, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE MATTER WOULD ONLY BE ANNOUNCED ON NOMINATION DAY ON THURSDAY.

HE SAID THAT IN EVERY ELECTION THERE WOULD SURELY BE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES WHO WOULD BE DROPPED TO PAVE WAY FOR NEW FACES.

ON TODAY'S MEETING, HE SAID THAT IT WAS TO REVIEW PREPARATIONS AND ARRANGE A PROGRAMME OF CAMPAIGN VISITS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION SET FOR OCT 20 AND 21.

THE MEETING ALSO DISCUSSED ELECTION PROCEDURES AND RULES AND REGULATIONS INCLUDING ON THE UNAUTHORISED PUTTING UP OF POSTERS ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES LIKE ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE POSTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE BARISAN NASIONAL WOULD ADHERE TO THE RULES AND REGULATION PERTAINING TO THE PUTTING UP OF POSTERS BUT COULD NOT DO ANTHING ABOUT THE POSTERS ALREADY PUT UP IN SUCH PLACES SINCE MONTHS AGO.

+IF THE DISTRICT COUNCILS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES WERE TO IMPOSE FINES, WE WILL HAVE TO PAY UP BUT FROM NOW ON WE WILL ABIDE BY THE SET RULES AND REGULATIONS,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA

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