

Mahathir: I want Daim to stay as Finance Minister

BANGI, Mon. — **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today that he is prepared to talk with **Datuk Paduka Daim Zainuddin** if the Finance Minister is serious about resigning from his post.

"Of course, if I can, I would like to retain his services," the Prime Minister said after opening a course here for bankers.

Dr Mahathir was responding to newsmen who asked him whether recent speculations that **Datuk Paduka Daim** would quit the Cabinet after tabling the Budget were true.

The Prime Minister said that he was not aware if **Datuk Paduka Daim** was serious about resigning from the government "although he has always been saying he wants to go off."

"He wanted to resign way back in 1986 but I did not allow him to go. I suppose resigning has always been on his mind," Dr Mahathir added.

Asked when **Datuk Paduka Daim** had last raised the matter, Dr Mahathir replied that it was before the general election.

"I told him no and that he was to stand for election," he added.

Asked about how he would react to the resignation now that the Budget has been tabled, Dr Mahathir said: "I can't pre-empt my decision without him saying it. If he raises the matter again, I'll talk to him."