

# Dr M: Why Daim wants to step down

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. Datuk Paduka Daim Zainuddin has written to the Prime Minister stating his wish to step down as Finance Minister.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not say when the letter was submitted to him, but said it contained reasons why Datuk Paduka Daim wanted to give up the post.

"The Finance Minister had, in a personal letter,

reminded me of the agreement he and I made when I appointed him minister," Dr Mahathir told newsmen after chairing a four-hour Umno supreme council meeting.

"He had agreed to be Finance Minister on condition that he stay only to help reorganise and improve the country's financial position.

"He said that he has fulfilled this task and it is

time I let him go."

Last week, the Prime Minister confirmed widespread speculation that Datuk Paduka Daim wanted to quit the Cabinet after tabling the 1991 Budget.

He said Datuk Paduka Daim had indicated as far back as 1986 that he wanted to quit.

Datuk Paduka Daim, a successful businessman before being brought into

the Cabinet in 1984, is also the Umno treasurer.

The Prime Minister said today that the country's finances had been in very bad shape before Datuk Paduka Daim took over.

"He has reorganised, restored and maintained our financial position. Our financial situation is in a healthy state," Dr Mahathir said.

Asked whether there

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would be a Cabinet reshuffle in view of Datuk Paduka Daim's intention to step down, Dr Mahathir said he had not made any decision on Datuk Paduka Daim's position yet.

"I do not wish to anticipate and pre-empt my own decision. I have not spoken to him yet. After I have, I will make the decision," he said. Datuk Paduka Daim is on leave overseas.