

15/10/77-14MST

CNS7632

U GE 16-10 00185 EA075

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LEAD Mahathir-Ghafar (With pix)  
GHAFAR BABA RESIGNS AS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct. 16 (Bernama) -- <sup>93</sup> Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced last night that Ghafar Baba had resigned from his post as Deputy Prime Minister. (9)

The resignation letter was submitted by Ghafar's Political Secretary to the Prime Minister's confidential secretary yesterday.

Earlier last night Ghafar's son, Mohamad Tamrin told reporters his father had submitted his resignation from his posts as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Rural Development.

Dr Mahathir told reporters last night he had plenty of time to decide on Ghafar's resignation.

"I have received his letter," he told reporters who thronged the VIP lounge at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang well before his scheduled departure for Malta for a two-day visit before attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Cyprus.

Speculation that Ghafar, 68, would resign today grew rife after the conclusion of nominations for posts on Sept. 30 in the Umno Supreme Council elections. -- more

ES JO LDB

16/10/01-02MST

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LEAD Mahathir-Ghafar 2 Kuala Lumpur

Ghafar, the incumbent Deputy President of Umno, received seven nominations to defend the post compared to the 143 nominations given to Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir said there was no necessity to appoint an acting Deputy Prime Minister.

Asked who would act as Prime Minister in his absence, Dr Mahathir said there was no necessity.

"No. I am still the Prime Minister. In some countries this is a problem as there might be a coup. I don't expect any coup," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Ghafar's resignation would have no impact on the government machinery from the administration aspect.

He said he was not too surprised by Ghafar's resignation because "I heard rumours too. So, having heard the rumours, I was not too surprised."

Dr Mahathir said he would deal with the situation "when I come to it".

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ES JO LDB

16/10/01-10MST

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LEAD Mahathir-Ghafar 3 Kuala Lumpur

On the possibility that he hold discussions with Ghafar, Dr Mahathir said he had yet to give thought to the matter.

He said he had not received resignations from any other ministers.

Prior to this, he had also not received any resignation letter from Ghafar, he added.

Hours earlier, Tamrin said his father had resigned as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Rural Development with effect from Oct.15.

He said Ghafar sent his resignation letter through his confidential secretary to the confidential secretary of the Prime Minister at this office here on Thursday.

Tamrin, the Member of Parliament for Batu Berendam, said Ghafar only resigned from his government posts.

Ghafar remained Deputy President of Umno and Member of Parliament for Jasin.

Asked where Ghafar was, Taamrin said: "He is overseas." -- more

ESJO LDB

▼16/10/01-29MST

U GE 16-10 00111 EA078

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LEAD Mahathir-Ghafar 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Anwar, who was in Kota Kinabalu, declined to comment when reporters approached him after meeting Sabah Umno members.

Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, contacted at his residence here, said he did not want to comment on Ghafar's resignation yet.

Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Isa Abdul Samad said Ghafar's decision should be respected.

"Resignation from a post is a routine process in any organisation and this includes the government," he told reporters after attending a state Anti-Corruption Agency and state Youth and Sports Department dinner. --

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ES JO LDB

▼16/10/01-30MST