

R GE 22-10 00175 ED020

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Mahathir-Ghafar

DR MAHATHIR WANTS TO DISCUSS GHAFAR'S POSITION

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LIMASSOL (CYPRUS), Oct 22 (Bernama) -- ⁷³ *8 Trip overseas* Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he hoped to meet Encik Ghafar Baba on his return from Cyprus to discuss Encik Ghafar's position.

Dr Mahathir said this was because he was initially informed that Encik Ghafar wanted to defend the Umno deputy president's post.

Speaking at a press conference after meeting Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong here, he said Encik Ghafar did not inform him when he withdrew from the contest.

"I have to think of the implications...I think let's wait until I return first," the Prime Minister said when asked to comment on Encik Ghafar's stand.

"I hope to be able to meet him on my return from here," he said.

Ghafar, who last week tendered his resignation as Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday rejected nominations to contest the Umno deputy president's post in next month's party elections. -- more

KGO YBY

♥22/10/21-24MST

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Mahathir-Ghafar 2 Limassol

Dr Mahathir said he was sticking to his stand not to attend the Apec summit in Seattle next month.

He said Goh did not raise the question of his attendance in Seattle when they exchanged views on the situation in Southeast Asia and Asia, including Apec (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation):

"But I inform him I am not going...although they propose to hold the Apec summit once every three years," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's stand on Apec was related to the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC).

Although the Clinton administration appeared to be not as firmly opposed to the EAEC as the Bush administration was, there had yet to be a clear stand from Washington on the EAEC, he said. -- more

KGO YBY

♥22/10/21-43MST

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Mahathir-Ghafar 3 Limassol

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia recently received information that there were moves to make Apec into a body like the European Community, into a "free trade area" encompassing all Apec members.

He said he told Goh that Apec membership (it has 15 members) should include all countries in the Pacific Rim, including Fiji and Vanuatu.

Dr Mahathir said it was premature of them to think of Apec as a "free trade area" so long as they did not know of its implications.

On the Cyprus issue, the Prime Minister said Malaysia had made known its stand much earlier, that is Cyprus should not be made into two states but should be a whole.

The Cyprus issue should be resolved through negotiations between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot, he said. -- more

KGO YBY

▼22/10/21-56MST

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Attn Editors: Pls delete second part, last par of Mahathir-Ghafar story on cheque presentation to ANC. Following is the corrected rptn.

Mahathir-Ghafar 4 (last) Limassol

Dr Mahathir also held separate meetings with new Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khalèda Zia.

Later today, he is scheduled to meet Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating.

-- Bernama

KGO YBY

▼23/10/00-14MST