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Mahathir-Ghafar

MAHATHIR DECLINES COMMENT ON GHAFAR'S POSITION

from Kuala Lumpur

LIMASSOL (CYPRUS), Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister ~~Datuk Seri Dr~~ ^{trip overseas}

Mahathir Mohamad today declined comment on Encik Ghafar Baba's decision to give up the post of secretary-general of the Barisan Nasional (BN).

"Let me get back (to Malaysia) first," he replied when questioned at a press conference for Malaysian journalists who had covered the Commonwealth summit here.

Ghafar had a meeting with several BN leaders today in Kuala Lumpur and told reporters later that he was relinquishing the post of secretary-general. He had submitted his resignation as deputy prime minister earlier this month and had declined nominations to defend the post of deputy president at the Umno elections scheduled for Nov 4.

Dr Mahathir, who is the Umno president, said he had no more advice for party members. "I gave my advice ... it looks like they do not want to listen," he said.

On an announcement by Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim that he (Anwar) had made no pact for the Umno election, Dr Mahathir said: "That is his view." -- more

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Anwar, with 145 nominations, has been returned unopposed as Umno deputy president after Ghafar declined to defend the post.

Dr Mahathir also said that the Malaysian budget for next year would focus on national development.

"We will also be thrifty in the use of funds so that we will not incur too many debts," he said when asked the objective of the budget which Anwar will table in the Dewan Rakyat on Friday.

"Apart from that, we will also concentrate on development of infrastructure, and make Malaysia more attractive to foreign investors," he said. -- Bernama

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