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DR MAHATHIR AMONG ASIA'S 50 MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE

KUALA LUMPUR, June 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been ranked as Asia's fourth most powerful political leader, according to a survey conducted by a regional weekly magazine.

Hong Kong-based Asiaweek said in its July 5 issue that the first three most powerful political leaders are President Suharto of Indonesia, President Jiang Zemin of China and President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan.

"The Power 50 list is a natural evolution for Asiaweek. It is a useful and provocative look at leadership and how it is practised in Asia. We plan to make the Power 50 an annual issue," said its editor Ann Morrison.

In compiling the list, she said Asiaweek's editors used key factors to impart objectivity and uniform parameters such as the kind of power the individuals have and the length of time they held it, whether the power is shared with or dependent on others and is their power on the rise or on the wane, in use or disuse.

Other factors include the number of people and amount of territory and wealth they control and to what degree.

Using these criteria, Morrison said more than half of the Power 50 are political leaders.

Also on the list are 28th ranked Hong Kong's Li Ka Shing, chairman of Cheung Kong Holdings and one of 11 billionaires on the list, and 34th place Dragon Head of the Sunn Yee On, the world's largest and most powerful triad group with an army of 34,000 members in Hong Kong who are mainly involved in drugs, gambling and movie production.

Asiaweek, which reports on Asian politics, business and culture, has an audited circulation of over 110,000 and is seen each week by about 560,000 readers across Asia and the world. -- BERNAMA

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