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Mahathir-Anniversary

DR MAHATHIR IS STATESMAN EXTRAORDINAIRE, SAYS PERAK MB

IPOH, July 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was today described as a "statesman extraordinaire" by Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib.

Ramli said Dr Mahathir, who had thrust Malaysia into the international limelight since he became Prime Minister on July 16, 1981, had no equal and had long since eclipsed all other regional leaders, both regionally and internationally.

"By all means, he should continue to serve the nation for as long as possible and even beyond the year 2000 because the longer he serves, the more beneficial it is for the nation," he told reporters after the one-day State Legislative Assembly sitting, here.

Ramli was commenting on Dr Mahathir's 15-year stint in office, come July 16, the longest term ever served by a Malaysian prime minister.

He said Dr Mahathir's ability, energy and experience would benefit the nation because he is "not only an implementor but also a teacher to us all."

Ramli said the menteris besar had always found the prime minister a very "good input" on socio-economic development ideas in the country.

"His mental and physical inputs on the country's economy, physical development and social development are very often twice as much as others'," he added.

He said Dr Mahathir's stand on certain global issues like Bosnia and South Africa's apartheid had also changed the course of international policies on those countries.

On the appointment of two more state executive councillors, Ramli said the appointment would be based on need and discussions with other states.

He added that the need for an increase in the number of state executive councillors did not arise at the moment.

There are currently eight state executive councillors in Perak, excluding the Menteri Besar. -- BERNAMA

ASM JK