

30 AUG 1997

Mahathir-Anwar

ANWAR NOT RESIGNING AS FINANCE MINISTER, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 30 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that his deputy, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, is not resigning as Finance Minister and dismissed allegations the current decline in share prices at the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange is due to the resignation rumours.

"Anwar is not resigning. He is going to be there and doing all he can about this thing," he told reporters after opening the MCA 44th annual general meeting at Wisma MCA here.

The Prime Minister, who announced several measures to prop up the local stock market and stem the slide in the ringgit two days ago, also said that he had not taken over the Finance Ministry.

He said he and his deputy met all the time and "we are working closely together."

Dr Mahathir said he was responsible simply because he is the head of government and he just could not let everybody carry on their responsibility without him giving a "helping hand".

"I'd like to tell these rumour mongers that I have not taken over the Ministry of Finance if that is what they are suggesting.

"These are the kind of rumours there are spreading...I don't know what to say about these people who have no national interests at all," he said.

The Prime Minister said such irresponsible rumour mongers "actually should be shot" because all they cared about is to make money for themselves as they do not care for the country.

Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that the stock market would recover in a week's time.

"It would take a bit of time to show some results but we expect share prices will eventually go up," he said.

He said everyone would suffer if the prices went down with brokers and bankers making less money.

"Remember in 1993 when the prices were going up, the brokers and remisiers were making tons of money because the prices were going up," he added.

On the International Monetary Fund's advice to Malaysia to scale down big projects, Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed because the IMF had not been very helpful.

"I would like to say that after it helped Thailand, the Thai baht is still sliding and the Thai economy is still in bad shape after borrowing US\$21 billion from them," he said.

"So why do you borrow from IMF which is not of any help?" he asked. --  
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