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DR MAHATHIR BACK IN ACTION AFTER REST

PETALING JAYA, Oct 16 (Bernama) -- Despite being down with a slight cold, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad took to the stage to address the 29th Asean Economic Ministers (AEM) meeting today with typical enthusiasm and vigour.

The energetic physician-turned-politician was in good health after two days of rest following a bout of flu, which according to his aides, was caused by an allergy to certain flowers and a hectic itinerary.

Dr Mahathir, who is said to be allergic to pollen, was reported to have got the cold after launching the Information Technology campaign at Angkasapuri last Saturday.

At today's function at the Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel here, Dr Mahathir had to pause a few times in delivering a 30-minute speech when the flu got to him and had him coughing.

A concerned International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz came to Dr Mahathir's aid and served him water.

The audience, appreciating his predicament, applauded to urge him on, whereupon Dr Mahathir smiled and continued with his speech.

In the eight-page speech, which he read through a prompter, he called on Asean countries, while inviting real long-term investments, to reject "hot-money operations which do not create wealth for us."

Dr Mahathir had a photography session with the ministers before leaving the hotel to attend another function. -- BERNAMA

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