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Anwar-Mahathir

FOREIGN REPORTS ON MAHATHIR'S RETIREMENT BASELESS, SAYS ANWAR

By: Arshi Daud

MANILA, May 20 (Bernama) -- Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim regards as baseless foreign reports speculating that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is stepping down.

He said Dr Mahathir was not planning on retiring due to health problems as speculated.

"He is still strong," he told a news conference after delivering a speech at the Pacific Basin Economic Council 30th international general meeting here.

He explained that his appointment as Acting Prime Minister was a continuity of what he had done in the past in the absence of Dr Mahathir in the country.

"I think I have more than 12 times been covering as the Acting Prime Minister," he said.

Nevertheless, Anwar said he was delighted and grateful for the appointment.

He pledged to do his best during the two-month period when the Prime Minister is on leave.

Anwar said he was comfortable in performing the task as he received full support from the Cabinet members, party and the Prime Minister himself.

Anwar also said as in the past he would still have to consult Dr Mahathir when major issues cropped up.

"But certainly, I will not want to bother him with details as he has full trust and confidence in me.

"I want him to rest and concentrate on other things. I want him to think, read, write and come back re-energised," added Anwar. -- BERNAMA

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