

19/02/1997

PM pours cold water on talk of Cabinet reshuffle

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today poured cold water over talk of an impending Cabinet reshuffle, saying he was not planning any for the near future.

He said however that he believed in the freedom of newspapers to speculate on the matter.

"I am not planning any (Cabinet reshuffle). Why should I plan any? I have no problems," he told reporters at the Kota Kinabalu airport before returning to Kuala Lumpur following an overnight visit to Sabah.

The Prime Minister was asked to comment on a Sin Chew Jit Poh report last Saturday that the Cabinet would be reshuffled soon.

"We believe in freedom of the Press, freedom of expression and freedom of speculation. So, they can speculate.

"If you care to look into the past, you would see that there had been so many predictions and speculations which were not accurate." He added there would always be some quarters who would take the credit when their persistent speculations eventually came true.

"If you say there will be elections next year and then there is none when the time comes, you keep on saying the elections will take place the following year, eventually we will have an election and then when we do have the election, they will say: ah, I told you so.

"But they have forgotten about the 10 times when they were wrong. They only care to remember the time they were right," he said.

He said the same thing applied to the speculation about a Cabinet reshuffle.

"They say the reshuffle will be this year. And when there is none, they will say next year and then the year after that. One day when there is really a reshuffle, they say: Oh we knew, we predicted that. We know everything, even how the PM is thinking," he quipped.

(END)