

# NO DPM YET

## Priority now for policies, not personalities, says Dr M

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday he has yet to decide on his deputy despite views from party leaders that the post should be filled quickly.

He said he had met mentris besar and chief ministers as well as many other leaders who had given him their views.

"I have not made up my mind. I always listen to people.

"I have made a statement that I will wait until next year's party elections. But others have a different view that we should not wait that long just in case anything happens to me," he said at the end of the Umno special general assembly.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, was respond-

ing to questions about intense speculation that he would announce the appointment of a new deputy prime minister soon to replace Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who was sacked on Sept 2.

Asked about his reaction on the opinions put forward by other leaders, Dr Mahathir replied: "At the moment, well, I listen to all views."

He reiterated that he had not made up his mind whether he would announce his new deputy before the party elections scheduled for June.

He added that some leaders had reminded him that he was himself made deputy prime minister before becoming Umno deputy president.

On the criteria of the person who would fill the vacancy, he quipped: "(An) exact replica of myself, if it is possible. I know it is not possible."

However, he said his priority was for the policies of

the present administration to be followed through.

"It is not personalities so much as the policies. That should give comfort to investors that there will be no sudden 180-degree turn (in policies)."

Asked whether there was any candidate who fit the bill, he replied in jest:

"Quite a lot of people. Some fit here, some fit there. If they fit in completely they'll be exactly my twin, but I don't have a twin."

Commenting on the subdued atmosphere during the assembly, Dr Mahathir said this was understandable because it was not a very interesting session as it had to do with amendments to the party constitution which the delegates supported anyway.

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