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Mahathir-Acting

MUSTAPA, DEPUTY HOME MINISTERS WILL TAKE CHARGE OF THINGS- DR M

SHAH ALAM, Oct 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Second Finance Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed and the two Deputy Home Ministers will take charge of things during his five-day working trip to Japan beginning tomorrow.

Dr Mahathir who is also the First Finance Minister and Minister of Home Affairs said it was not necessary for him to appoint a Deputy Prime Minister.

The two deputy Home Ministers are Datuk Tajol Rosli Ghazali and Datuk Ong Kah Ting.

"The Prime Minister's routine duties can be carried out as usual. In other matters, they can contact me all the time," he told reporters after launching the National Unity Day here.

In a lighter vein, Dr Mahathir said it would take him only six hours to fly to KL from Tokyo if necessary.

Asked about the reported meeting between former Deputy Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail and US Ambassador John Mallot, Dr Mahathir said the government did not prevent anyone from holding such meetings.

"If you want to meet, meet-lah, we are not stopping, just do not tell lies, that's all," the Prime Minister said.

On investigations into the report that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was beaten while in police custody, he said they were still on and the findings would be submitted to the Attorney General.

Dr Mahathir said he was not involved in the investigations.

Asked about the freeing of Anwar from ISA (Internal Security Act) detention, Dr Mahathir said : "That is his right, I suppose... habeas corpus right".

-- BERNAMA

RAZ AAM