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PM expects `fireworks' at assembly

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he anticipates "fireworks" at the coming Umno general assembly as various issues will be brought up by delegates.

"As usual, I will give advice to the delegates but that would not stop them from talking. We are a democratic party.

"They will talk about a lot of things. We are expecting a lot of fireworks," he told newsmen after visiting the Multimedia University construction site in Cyberjaya yesterday.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, was asked what advice he will give the delegates during the assembly scheduled from Thursday to Sunday.

"I will give advice to them when I talk to them. I am supposed to talk to them on Wednesday," he added.

On the statement by Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik that all leaders of the component parties of Barisan Nasional (BN), had pledged their support and loyalty to the Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir said he was happy and gratified with the support.

"I am very gratified ... very happy that they pledged their loyalty to me. I am quite sure, it is not personal.

"I think it is because the country needs a leader and they pledged to give their support to the present leader," he added.

In a news report, Dr Ling, who is also MCA president, had said that BN leaders had pledged their support and loyalty to Dr Mahathir as the Prime Minister during the party's supreme council meeting last Sunday.

Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, dismissed suggestions that the BN supreme council meeting was held to seek support and loyalty from the party's council members.

"The meeting is just to explain to all members about the country's economic situation. It is important for them to understand.

"That (BN supreme council meeting) is not a special meeting in any way," he clarified.

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