

06 APR 1999

Abdullah-Mahathir

DR MAHATHIR HAS BRONCHITIS, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, April 6 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is warded at the National Heart Institute (IJN) for bronchitis and not because of any heart problem, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said Dr Mahathir's condition is stable and he is still resting.

"A statement was made. He has bronchitis, something to do with his chest... his lung," he said when asked by a reporter why Dr Mahathir is warded.

"Anyway it is not his heart, nothing to do with his jantung, in case you are wondering whether it has anything to do with his heart," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby, here.

Abdullah said he contacted the IJN this morning asking about Dr Mahathir's condition and was told that Dr Mahathir should rest.

"Nothing to worry at the moment. I think he (Dr Mahathir) should be given an opportunity to rest as much as he should.

"You know, if the PM is released early from the hospital, then he will always be organising a lot of things and trying to do so many things, but the hospital feels that he should rest," he said.

Asked if there was any indication when Dr Mahathir would be discharged, Abdullah said he did not know when, and it was up to the hospital.

"Certainly he needs a lot of rest. If you leave it to PM, he wants to come out right away. That's him ... he is anxious to be in his office to do his work but his doctors feel he should rest," he said.

Dr Mahathir was admitted to the IJN last Friday after performing the Haj in Mecca. According to a statement from his office on Sunday he was warded for lung infection and was advised by his doctors to take a good rest.

Asked on talk that the prime minister was gravely ill, Abdullah said: "Not true, these are concocted stories. It is very unkind to say that."

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, was also asked whether the former Pulau Pinang Umno Youth Chief, Dr Abdul Rahim Ghouse, had been detained. He said: "I've not heard any news that Abdul Rahim was detained."

-- BERNAMA

HS JK