

07 APR 1999
Mahathir-Improvement
DR MAHATHIR'S CONDITION IMPROVING

KUALA LUMPUR, April 7 (Bernama) -- The health condition of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is undergoing treatment at the National Heart Institute (IJN) is improving, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office today.

"Treatment given to him by doctors at the IJN has shown positive and encouraging results," it said in the statement issued here at 4pm.

It said that the doctors have however advised the prime minister, who was admitted to the IJN for lung infection on Friday night, to continue his rest at the IJN until his full recovery.

The statement also said that Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, thanked all well-wishers for their cards, flowers and telephone calls.

"Dr Mahathir is touched by the gestures of the people who have prayed for his recovery so that he could resume his duties as soon as possible," the statement said.

It added that the prime minister apologised for not being able to personally meet visitors on the advice of his doctors who want him to have complete rest.

Today's statement is the second issued by the Prime Minister's Office on Dr Mahathir's condition. The first statement issued on Sunday was on his admission to the IJN following lung infection on his return from his pilgrimage to Mecca last Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said that Dr Mahathir, who was confined in bed, had made much improvement and had been walking in his room at the IJN.

"I have been informed of Dr Mahathir's condition by one of his aides today," he told reporters at the lobby of parliament house, here.

Asked whether prime minister had before this been unable to walk, Abdullah said that he had not been informed of the matter.

"Before this, I was not informed whether he had any problem but I was told he slept and rested a lot and today, he got up and was walking," he said.

He said that this certainly showed that Dr Mahathir had made much improvement.

"There is no need to worry over the prime minister's condition. We should all continue to pray for his speedier recovery so that he could resume his duties," he said.

Abdullah also said that he visited Dr Mahathir yesterday afternoon when he informed the prime minister regarding tasks he had performed on his behalf.

He also said yesterday that doctors treating the prime minister had informed him of Dr Mahathir's condition which was then stable and that he required rest.

On rumours spread including over the Internet on the prime minister's condition, Abdullah said that he failed to understand how Dr Mahathir's condition could be used as an issue to cause hurt feelings and create anxiety.

"This shouldn't happen at all because he is now sick and we should pray for his speedy recovery instead of making inappropriate remarks," he said.

Abdullah said that if there were matters that needed to be told, the government would issue a statement.

He advised the public not to entertain rumour-mongers.

"When people react to the rumours with shock, panic and alarm, it will further encouraged the rumour-mongers. They may have certain motives," he said.

Earlier, when replying to a question by Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Tanjong) in the Dewan Rakyat on Dr Mahathir's condition, Abdullah said that it had nothing to do with his heart.

He only had phlegm in his lungs, he added.

-- BERNAMA

GM NZ/HS RM