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MAHATHIR ACCEPTS AH LEK'S DECISION TO QUIT

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek's decision to retire from active politics would have to be accepted.

"If that is his decision, we will honour his wishes. We do not want to force people," he told editors from Chinese and Tamil newspapers at his office here today.

Lim, 56, who is MCA deputy president, announced yesterday that he would not be defending his Bentong parliamentary seat in the Nov 29 general election.

He said he had written to the prime minister of his intention to retire after 25 years in politics "to spend more time with my family".

Dr Mahathir said Lim had given good service to the government.

Lim had been a Pahang state executive councillor for 15 years and minister for 10 years.

"If he feels it is time for him to retire, we have to accept that," said the prime minister.

-- BERNAMA

MOK YBY