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Mahathir-recovering

MAHATHIR UP AND ABOUT, FAST RECOVERING

KUALA LUMPUR, April 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was admitted to the National Heart Institute (IJN) last Friday for a chest infection, is up and about and fast recovering.

In fact he would be back at the office already if not for his doctors who want him to have a complete rest and recover fully before allowing him to return to his often punishing work schedule.

The Prime Minister's Office allowed Bernama and Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) journalists and cameramen to visit Dr Mahathir at his ward at the IJN this evening.

The Prime Minister and his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, several of their children and grandchildren were spending some time looking through get-well messages and cards.

Dr Mahathir then consented to RTM recording his "thank you" message to all well-wishers.

He thanked all Malaysians who had prayed for his speedy recovery and who had sent flowers, cards, messages, e-mail and made phone calls to enquire about his health.

"Alhamdulillah (Thank God), I'm getting better ... my appetite has improved. There is no need for anyone to worry."

Dr Mahathir said he was getting very good treatment from the local doctors, nurses and other staff.

The Prime Minister said he would like to return to work but his doctors wanted him to rest for a while more.

"I'll be back at work soon," said the 73-year old premier who apparently has been keeping up with developments both at home and abroad despite being warded. There was a stack of today's newspapers in his ante-room at the hospital.

The Prime Minister was also touched by the get-well message received via Internet from Azhar Mansor, the Malaysian sailor who is attempting to circumnavigate the world non-stop on an East-West-East route.

"I hope he succeeds," said Dr Mahathir who is patron of the Jalur Gemilang challenge.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi visited Dr Mahathir today but doctors are still not allowing the Prime Minister to have ordinary visitors.

Meanwhile, among those who have sent get-well-soon messages to Dr Mahathir are Prime Ministers Goh Chok Tong (Singapore), Nawaz Sharif (Pakistan) and Vincent Siew (Taiwan).

Dr Mahathir seemed pleased when he was shown by Dr Siti Hasmah a get-well card from the Malaysian Bar Council.

The Prime Minister was warded at the IJN two days after his return from performing the haj in Mecca on March 31.

According to doctors, it is quite common for Malaysian pilgrims to contract lung infection because of the heat and dry climatic conditions in Saudi Arabia.

"It is common for a returning pilgrim to suffer this condition for a week or two," said a doctor who declined to be named. -- Bernama

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