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Mahathir-Reshuffle

RESHUFFLE NOT NECESSARY FOR APPOINTMENT OF FINANCE MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the appointment of a Finance Minister may not necessarily involve a cabinet reshuffle as he could select a candidate who is not a minister.

Agreeing that the post was a key portfolio, he said, "I can appoint anybody. It does not necessarily have to be another minister to fill the post".

Dr Mahathir was responding to a question on whether the appointment of a new Finance Minister would lead to some changes in the government.

He was speaking at a press conference after his winding up speech at the 55th Umno General Assembly which ended here today.

Asked again on the resignation of former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, he said it was not the first time that Daim had left the government.

Dr Mahathir said his explanation on Daim had been simple and there was nothing mysterious about it (his resignation) nor were there any quarrel or dispute involved.

At the press conference, Dr Mahathir was also asked if there was an Umno dilemma since he touched on the weaknesses and problems faced by the Malays in his concluding speech.

He admitted that there was a dilemma but added that there were certain quarters who did not want to acknowledge Umno's achievements and to see the Malays becoming successful.

The successful ones, he added, were often branded as cronies of the government although they had become successful on their own accord.

Recalling a cartoon strip which remarked that there were no Malays among the four Malaysians who emerged among the world's richest men, Dr Mahathir said they (the Malays) will never make it to the top as long as there were these ill feelings among them.

-- BERNAMA

SHO AZZ DVS