

Pasir Mas Umno division wants

Not 17 OCT 2002

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Despite calls from party leaders for Umno members to stop urging Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to contest in the next general election, a division in Kelantan is adamant to ask the Prime Minister to do so.

Pasir Mas Umno division chief Datuk Ibrahim Ali said his committee met two weeks ago and almost all agreed that they hold an extraordinary general meeting to discuss a resolution to ask Dr Mahathir to contest in the next general election.

"The resolution has nothing to do

with asking Dr Mahathir to reconsider his decision to resign as the Prime Minister or Umno president.

"We want him to contest in the general election so that, if his services are needed by the nation, Dr Mahathir has the political platform to participate," Ibrahim said today.

He said the majority of the Pasir Mas division committee which decided on the special meeting to be held was in accordance with the party constitution.

"The party constitution requires at

least two-thirds of the committee members to agree for the extraordinary meeting to be called.

"We had more than that."

Ibrahim said the extraordinary meeting would be held on Oct 24.

On what prompted the division committee to come up with the resolution, Ibrahim said it was in view of the realities that were going on in Malaysia and in the rest of the world.

"We have the problems of terrorism, the negative perception of Islam and Muslims, the US threat to attack Iraq, the unsettled water agreement

PM to contest in next polls

with Singapore and the issue of teaching Mathematics and Science in English.

"For the Muslim world, Dr Mahathir's voice is still necessary.

"In our domestic affairs, Dr Mahathir still commands the respect of the nation."

Ibrahim also took Information Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Zainuddin Maidin to task for suggesting that the resolution to ask Dr Mahathir to contest in the next general election as undermining Prime Minister-designate Datuk Seri

Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"The resolution has nothing to do with questioning of Pak Lah's (Abdullah) ability.

"We want Dr Mahathir to contest so as to give the nation an option if Dr Mahathir's services are needed."

Ibrahim said Zainuddin was the one who had confused the issue and was trying to make the Pasir Mas division to look as if it lacked confidence in Abdullah.

"Zainuddin, in trying to prove that he is most loyal to Pak Lah should

not shoot his mouth off and not understand what was said.

"The crux of the matter is that we are not asking Dr Mahathir to reconsider his plans to resign as Prime Minister or Umno president.

"We just want him to contest in the next general election."

Ibrahim also clarified newspaper reports which stated that the resolution would be tabled by the Kelantan Umno at its State convention.

"It is a resolution by our division. Whether others agree or not, it is not our business."