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A shocker

JUST as we were about to put the current issue to print over the weekend, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad dropped his bombshell about resigning.

We felt it was too important an issue to ignore. The man who has helmed the country's rapid economic growth and progress for the last 21 years was calling it a day. What are the reasons? What are the repercussions?

So, our cover story this time addresses these issues. Editor-in-Chief A Kadir Jasin writes on why the Prime Minister should be given a chance to make a choice on whether to stay or retire.

Deputy Editor Abdul Razak Abu Chik looks at the next possible line-up in Umno led by Dr Mahathir's successor Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. News Editor M Shanmugam and writers Norsiah Nurani, Seelen Sakran, Joanna Sze, Bhupinder Singh and Clarence Y K Ngui, meanwhile, write on topics like the debates at the recent Umno General Assembly, Dr Mahathir's landmark policies and how he rose to where he is today.

Elsewhere, we look at the recent controversy surrounding Berjaya Sports Toto Bhd's share price. It would be interesting to see how the Iculs issued by the company affect the overall picture.

There is market talk that a substantial stake in Industrial Concrete Products could be up for sale. Will there be takers?

Our 'Stock Watch' column features blue chip Telekom Malaysia Bhd. In the light of rapid changes in the telecommunications industry, we find analysts having mixed reactions about the stock's prospects.

In another story, a substantial stake in Commerce-Asset Holding Bhd is being put up for sale. We look at the implication of how this might influence the current shareholding structure of the company.

In politics, we track the latest developments in the Sarawak National Party or SNAP. Can a peace formula be worked out or will the crisis deepen?

Our personality profiled this time around is Prof Dr Syed Hussein Alatas, whose ideas are often described as ahead of his time. Find out what makes this sometimes controversial academic tick.

Our other stories are on security at American airports post-Sept 11, rights of minority shareholders, why it could be a good time to buy residential property, share buybacks, Pakistan's economy, warrants and bounced cheques.

Our mb-e lead story, meanwhile, is on the digital camera war. S Jai Shankar writes on, among others, whether a price war is likely to erupt soon.