

23 JUN 2002

Mahathir-Vacation

MAHATHIR LEAVES FOR VACATION IN EUROPE

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad left today for a weeklong vacation in Europe.

His press secretary, Datuk Zakaria Abdul Wahab, said Dr Mahathir, accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, left the Royal Malaysia Air Force (RMAF) base in Subang on board a government executive aircraft at about 10am.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, religious advisor to the prime minister Tan Sri Dr Abdul Hamid Othman and staff of the Prime Minister's office were among those who sent him off.

Dr Mahathir was originally scheduled to depart for the vacation tonight.

Yesterday he shocked the nation by announcing his resignation from all posts in Umno and the Barisan Nasional on the final day of the Umno general assembly but retracted his decision following appeals by the Umno supreme council members.

It is learnt that Abdullah and the three Umno vice-presidents, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib, met Dr Mahathir at Seri Perdana, Putrajaya, at 9am today.

Present were Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

-- BERNAMA

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