

04 DEC 2002

Mahathir-Doctor

MAHATHIR SAYS HE ALWAYS HAD FAITH IN LOCAL DOCTORS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 4 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he has never doubted the ability of local doctors and surgeons in performing operations on patients.

"Others may have doubts but I have never," said the prime minister. "That's why I have trusted myself to our own surgeons."

"We have surgeons who are as qualified as those in other countries. Some of them may in fact be better than them," he told reporters after visiting conjoined twins Azama and Azami Kamarulzaman at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng.

The seven-month-old girls, joined at the intestines, bladder, liver and partially at the heart, were separated in a 19-hour operation at the hospital on Nov 23. The operation was carried out by a 46-member medical team including specialists from throughout the country.

"The younger one (Azami) looks weaker. I believe she was weak from the beginning. She probably will take some time before she could be discharged but the doctors say she is doing okay," she said.

Kuala Lumpur Hospital pediatrician Dr Zakaria Zahari, who headed the team that separated the twins, said Azama was expected to be transferred from the Intensive Care Unit to a normal ward today.

She was expected to be discharged next week, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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