

24/06/2002

No objection from Dr M (HL)

Rosnazura Idrus

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not object to the Umno supreme council's unanimous decision that he should continue to lead the party and nation.

Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the decision, made at last night's emergency council meeting, was conveyed to the party president and Prime Minister at Seri Perdana this morning.

Abdullah led a delegation comprising Umno's management committee to meet Dr Mahathir just before he left for his foreign holiday. Abdullah was accompanied by vice-presidents Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib, secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Wanita chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein.

It is learnt that the supreme council will meet again on Tuesday to deliberate the issue.

Abdullah was asked by reporters to disclose what transpired at the hour-long meeting. He spoke to reporters at the launching of the KLIA Transit train service at Bandar Tasik Selatan here.

Abdullah said: "Dr Mahathir also agreed that the Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting should be convened soon. As friends of Umno, they surely would want to know in detail what actually happened."

BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat has been asked to fix a date for the meeting.

In his winding-up speech at the close of the Umno general assembly yesterday, Dr Mahathir stunned the nation when he announced his resignation from all party posts and as BN chairman.

The assembly promptly rejected Dr Mahathir's announcement, saying that Umno, BN and the nation still needed his leadership.

After Tuesday's meeting, State Umno chiefs are expected to explain what has transpired in the last couple of days to the grassroots.

Asked about Dr Mahathir's leave, Abdullah said: "It had been planned long before, not just a few days ago. The Cabinet had approved his leave."

Asked whether he knew where Dr Mahathir would be holidaying, he said he did not know but added that the Prime Minister would be away for 10 days.

Dr Mahathir left Seri Perdana about 9.30am for the Royal Malaysian Air Force base in Subang and flew off to Naples, Italy. He was accompanied by his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

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