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VCs, rectors pledge support for Dr M

Chok Suat Ling

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Vice-chancellors and rectors of all public higher educational institutions in the country today came together to pledge their support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

They said Dr Mahathir had contributed much towards higher education and had propelled education towards excellence.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Abu Hassan Othman, who represented all the vice-chancellors and rectors, said the Prime Minister's leadership was needed to guide the people and country to greater heights.

The public universities and university colleges that pledged their support were Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Utara Malaysia, the International Islamic University Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara and Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris.

The university colleges were Kolej Universiti Islam Malaysia, Kolej Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Kolej Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, Kolej Universiti Teknologi Kebangsaan Malaysia and Kolej Universiti Kejuruteraan dan Teknikal Malaysia.

Abu Hassan said the vice-chancellors and rectors did not preclude the possibility of organising a meeting with Dr Mahathir to express their views. Abu Hassan said students would also be allowed to express their support for the Prime Minister.

"We see some students, like those from UM, have already gathered to voice their support for Dr Mahathir," he said after chairing the Vice-Chancellors/Rectors Committee meeting at the Open University Malaysia.

Universiti Utara Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Ahmad Fawzi Mohd Basri said all the vice-chancellors and rectors were concerned with what was happening in the country.

"If the Prime Minister retires now it will have great implications for the people. He has said before that he wants to retire... but he cannot do that now as he is still needed.

"When he announced his decision to leave the other day, it was a shock to us all."

Universiti Sains Malaysia deputy vice-chancellor (academic) Prof Syed Ahmad Hussein, who represented the USM vice-chancellor at the meeting today, said the people should not just support the Prime Minister, but also his initiatives.

"Word has it that Dr Mahathir wanted to leave as he was tired of the prevailing mindset among the Malays. Therefore, there should also be support towards efforts to change this mindset."

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