

26 JUN 2002

Mahathir-Reaction

MALAYSIANS CONFIDENT OF SMOOTH TRANSITION

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26 (Bernama) -- Malaysians from all walks of life are confident of a smooth transition of power from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Datuk Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi between now and October next year.

The Malaysian Trades Union Congress in a statement said its members accepted and respected Dr Mahathir's decision to retire in October next year.

"We accept the fact that change cannot be avoided and this is also true in the leadership of the nation," the MTUC said in a statement.

The MTUC said Malaysians should take pride in this system of transition of power.

In Johor Baharu, vice president of the Johor Consumer Association Faizal Haji Omar said Dr Mahathir's wisdom in agreeing to stay on until October next year would preserve political and economic stability and ensure continuity.

He said Malaysians were relieved and confident that no untoward political incidents would occur after hearing the statement from Umno Secretary-General Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob yesterday following the Umno Supreme Council meeting and the expression of full support for Abdullah by all Barisan Nasional component parties.

Johor Gerakan Chairman Teo Kok Chi said the people while wanting Dr Mahathir to continue leading the country should also accept the fact that there would come a time for leaders to retire.

Johor Gerakan fully supported the transition of power as announced by Tan Sri Khalil and was confident of the country's continued peace and progress.

Pensioner Yahya Zainal, 63, who walked all the way to Johor Baharu Bernama office, to express his views said the Umno Supreme Council and BN leaders had made a wise decision in accepting Dr Mahathir's decision to retire.

"We all love Dr Mahathir who had made immense contributions to the country and now we should respect his decision. He needs sometime for himself and his family after having given his best to all of us," he said.

Lokman Junit, who sells Islamic Artistic Image goods in Pontian, expressed support for the transition of power.

Company executive Dr R.Sankaran said Dr Mahathir's decision to retire while being at the height of his success showed that he is a great statesman as it is rare for persons in that position to give up power.

Pahang Umno Youth while respecting the decision of Dr Mahathir to retire expressed full support for Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as the fifth Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Its head, Ismail Saari said even as the country still needed the leadership qualities of Dr Mahathir, Malaysians should also accept the fact that the country needed a new crop of leaders to continue heading the nation in the future.

"We hold in high esteem Dr Mahathir and will be loyal to him and at the same time we will be undivided in our support for Datuk Seri Abdullah's leadership of the nation," he told Bernama.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, the Malay Students Federation (GPMS) expressed confidence that Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as Prime Minister would continue with the leadership of excellence.

Its Secretary-General Syed Anuar Syed Mohamad said the GPMS was grateful to Dr Mahathir for placing his trust in Datuk Seri Abdullah to continue leading the nation after his retirement in October next year.

The GPMS was convinced that Datuk Seri Abdullah with his wide administrative experience, calibre, dynamism and charisma would ably lead Malaysia into the challenging era of globalisation, he said.

He said the GPMS was proud that Datuk Seri Abdullah, one of its past presidents, had been given the honour to lead the nation after Dr Mahathir's retirement.

Meanwhile Negeri Sembilan Umno has expressed full support for Datuk Seri Abdullah to lead the nation after Dr Mahathir's retirement.

"We will ensure support for Datuk Seri Abdullah is comprehensive right from the grassroot level. This is our responsibilitypreserve unity so that our party will remain strong and help Abdullah during this transition of power," Menteri Besar and State Umno Chief Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad said.

"The state Umno also wishes to express its appreciation to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for withdrawing his resignation and agreeing to the period of transition," he said after chairing the state executive council meeting.

"The Negeri Sembilan Umno thanks Dr Mahathir for placing the interest of the party above that of his personal and family interest," Isa said. kepentingan diri dan keluarga beliau.

"Hence Umno and the BN have retained the tradition of transition of power in the spirit of harmony and goodwill," he added

Meanwhile Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said Johor Umno and the BN had full confidence in Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as Dr Mahathir's successor after October next year.

"We have full confidence in the leadership of Datuk Seri Abdullah in the discharging of his duties as Umno president and Prime Minister.....we are giving him our solid support."

He said the state Umno and BN would also explain to all levels of the arty the transition of power from Dr Mahathir to Datuk Seri Abdullah between now and October next year.

"I believe all party members and the people very much appreciate the approach that has been adopted and unity and support will prevail during this period of transition of power," he told reporters.

Abdul Ghani, who is Johor Umno Chief and Chairman of the State BN, said Johor accepted Dr Mahathir's decision to retire by the end of October.

-- BERNAMA
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