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Mahathir-Abdullah

ABDULLAH PASSES WITH FLYING COLOURS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

BINTULU, May 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Ser Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, has passed his two-month stint as acting Prime Minister with flying colours.

"I think he came through with flying colours. I can reassure you that while on holiday he did not ring me to find out what the issues are. He is able to carry on, on his own," he told a news conference after opening the Petronas natural liquefied gas (LNG) complex here.

Dr Mahathir said that although Abdullah reported some of the things to him, all the decision were Abdullah's.

Abdullah had done very well in the last two months, he said, adding: "I wish my leave was longer."

On doubts on Abdullah's performance as reported in "The Economist", he said it was not worthwhile to quote the magazine.

Dr Mahathir said that if the Economist was sincere, when Malaysia did far better than other countries which had achieved independence at the same time, it would have credited Malaysia.

"They are not happy. They like us to fight each other like in Africa. It is not worthwhile to convince them of anything. The whites are superior to the yellow-skinned," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Economist was not very complimentary to him either.

He said: "Let them pit people against each other. I am not going to respond to such stupidity,

"These people will do anything. There's no point commenting on them. They have got a biased view. They think they can carry out a regime change in this country because now all countries must be subjected to regime change and find some leader who is willing to kowtow (be servile) to them."

Dr Mahathir said Abdullah did not kowtow to them, "I am quite sure he will not be liked by them."

The Economist had, in its April 5 issue, carried unfounded allegations against Malaysia, belittling the policies and programmes implemented by the government under Dr Mahathir's leadership and casting doubts on Abdullah's credibility.

On Abdullah taking over as prime minister, Dr Mahathir said that he would be resigning by end of October.

"I hope to resign after the OIC (Organisation of the Islamic Conference) meeting but I have been requested to stay on by some countries," he said.

Noting that during the Iraq war the western media was very good at concocting lies and telling a different story, Dr Mahathir said: "They never report about the suffering of the people of Iraq...western democracy is about cutting people's legs and arms."

On the high port call charges at the LNG complex, Dr Mahathir said he was studying the proposal to reduce the charges and would announce it sometime soon.

Asked if he had formed any new ideas during his leave, he said he had ideas from what he had seen overseas which could be applied here like in the industries.

"But I have only six months left," he said.

He also said that he wanted development to be brought to the rural areas because if development was focused only on the towns, the rural folk

would be left behind when the nation developed.

-- BERNAMA

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