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Mahathir-Winding (Decision)

DR MAHATHIR DECIDES TO QUIT AT THE PEAK OF HIS CAREER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 21 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he decided to quit from all posts in Umno and the government while still at the peak of his career.

"My mother told me the best time to stop eating is when you are enjoying the food. I remembered the advice and so decided to quit while I am still enjoying being the Prime Minister and Umno President.

"...not quitting when you are being pushed out, when you are no longer popular, or for destroying the party, and I am grateful that Umno has been successfully rehabilitated," he said in his winding-up speech on the last day of the 54th Umno General Assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

Dr Mahathir will give up all posts in Umno and the government after the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit in October. He has named Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as his successor.

In his hour-long speech, Dr Mahathir also thanked the delegates for expressing their support and appreciation to him when debating the presidential and the motions of economy, education and religion.

Dr Mahathir said these appreciations were actually meant for the Umno President.

"If the President is not loved...it's a sign that our party is divided. As such, expressing our love for the President means expressing our love for party and the struggle for our race, religion and country.

"Carry on to the next President," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also glad to note that the general assembly which started last Thursday had proceeded without any untoward incident.

"I also wish to congratulate all those present for the smooth meeting although there was talk earlier of certain thing will happen. Alhamdulillah, nothing happened even with so many people present," he said.

He said that although this would be his last to attend the general assembly as Umno President, he hoped to follow next year's proceedings as an ordinary party member.

"I want to feel how it is like to be seated below (among party members). The view is slightly different," he said.

The Prime Minister was also grateful for the big turn-out of delegates, observers and party supporters at this year's general assembly.

On the debate, he said there were no extreme criticisms of the party and the government, only support for the government's actions and policies.

He said what was needed were constructive criticisms and not extreme criticisms which the opposition could use to hit back at Umno.

"Don't give others the weapon to stab us back, and while making criticisms, watch our language and keep focus," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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