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Mahathir-Harun

DR MAHATHIR SAYS HE'S INDEBTED TO HARUN IDRIS

By: Arul Rajoo

BANGKOK, Oct 19 (Bernama) - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he is indebted to Datuk Seri Harun Idris for bringing him back into Umno after he was expelled from the party in 1969.

"I acknowledge his contributions to Umno and to myself. Although, we were not close, the fact is that he was the one who brought me back (into Umno)," said the Umno president when asked to comment on the demise of the former Selangor Menteri Besar in Kuala Lumpur this afternoon.

Dr Mahathir is here to attend his last Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum before he retires on Oct 31.

The Prime Minister said that after he was expelled from the party, Harun made every endeavour to bring him back into Umno and even went to see him in Alor Star.

Harun died of a stroke at his residence at No.10, Langgak Duta, Taman Duta, here. He was 78 years old.

Dr Mahathir said he was sad when Harun was imprisoned in 1976 for corruption and when he became Prime Minister in 1981, he tried to free him.

In 1982, Harun was granted the royal pardon after serving three and half years of his sentence.

Dr Mahathir however said that Harun, who returned to active politics after his release, seemed to disagree with him and their relationship suffered.

To a question, he said he had not seen Harun for a long time.

-- BERNAMA.

AR HK ABG