

23 MAY 2003

Mahathir-Retire

I'LL DEFINITELY RETIRE IN OCTOBER, SAYS DR M

JITRA, May 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reiterated today that he will definitely retire from all posts in the government and Umno in October as he had promised.

The Prime Minister said he had full confidence that his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had the capabilities to take over his posts in the government and the party.

He said he did not worry that his resignation would lead to problems in Umno and the country.

"I've made the statement to resign. If I renege on my promise, then my leadership will no longer be credible.

"They will say this is Dr Mahathir's drama. Actually, he wants to carry on. I think people will laugh at me and also Umno," he said in his adjournment speech at the delegates' meeting of the Kubang Pasu Umno division which he heads.

Dr Mahathir said this in response to a resolution adopted by the division urging him to continue helming Umno and the division as his leadership was still needed.

The motion was moved by division committee member Aman Khan Mohamad Hussin and was seconded by Anuar Zainon. The motion was passed unanimously.

Dr Mahathir said he was touched by the resolution but he had to keep to his promise.

He said he would stick to his decision to retire although there were calls urging him to continue his leadership.

"I want to see many more Umno leaders emerging to take over the leadership at the division, supreme council and also the government," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he believed that they could implement many things which could not be done during his leadership.

Touching on his replacement in the Kubang Pasu parliamentary constituency, he said he would not allow his family members to contest in this constituency or in any other constituencies.

"I give an assurance that nobody from my family will contest here or in other constituencies," he said.

The Prime Minister said he did not have a dynasty as the country practised democracy.

Dr Mahathir, who has been the Kubang Pasu MP since 1974, hoped anyone picked as the candidate for the constituency in the coming election would enjoy the voters' support.

-- BERNAMA

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