

27/07/2005

Mahathir-Decline

MAHATHIR DISAPPOINTS REPORTERS

SHAH ALAM, July 27 (Bernama) -- Eager reporters hoping for quotable quotes from former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, whose statement on the Approved Permit (AP) controversy yesterday received wide media coverage, were disappointed today.

They flocked around him and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali as the two were leaving a gathering at the office of media company Karang kraf here, and he initially appeared to welcome their presence.

However, when a reporter posed a question on the AP, Dr Mahathir responded: "Don't want-lah."

The couple then got into their car and drove off.

Dr Mahathir yesterday claimed that International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz had misled delegates at the recent Umno general assembly on the issue.

Earlier today, Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah spent time with 50 children who were invited by Karang kraf for the celebration of the second anniversary of its magazine "Bintang Kecil".

They were peppered with questions by the children, who wanted to know how they celebrated their birthdays, their ambitions, their take on fashion, the animal which they found most repulsive and the difference between today's children and those in their younger days.

Dr Mahathir said he had many invitations to mark his 80th birthday, and the more celebrations he attended, the more he was reminded of his age.

In the past, he said, he usually celebrated his birthdays outside the country accompanied by his wife and several bodyguards to avoid the fuss.

Dr Mahathir revealed he found snakes the most repulsive animal, a feeling which he had had since he was young.

Dr Siti Hasmah said she aspired to be a journalist when she was young but changed her mind to take up medicine instead after her mother fell ill and no one could tell what she was suffering from.

On the difference between young girls in her days and the present day, she said children in the past wore whatever their parents picked for them while today's children had magazines, television and friends to influence their fashion.

-- BERNAMA

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