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Dr M: Umno assembly to go on as scheduled

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Umno general assembly will be held in June as scheduled, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said he did not see any reason why it should be postponed to October.

"I don't see the reason. It should be held as scheduled," he said when asked to comment on a proposal that the annual assembly be held in October to enable him to bid farewell as Prime Minister and party president on a party platform.

He was speaking at a Press conference after witnessing a rehearsal of the opening ceremony of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit at the Putra World Trade Centre.

The proposal that the assembly be held immediately after the Organisation of Islamic Conference meeting in October is actively being promoted to make it the last important function to be attended by the Prime Minister.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob had said yesterday the proposal was likely to be discussed by the supreme council at its next meeting.

Dr Mahathir was also asked to respond to a statement by the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday describing him as an entertaining story-teller after his disclosure that Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong did not agree to the construction of a new bridge to replace the Causeway because of his (Goh) nostalgia for the facility.

"It is all right, that's their comment. It does not hurt me, " said Dr Mahathir.