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`Opposition should stop disbelieving Dr M will retire'

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is firm in his decision to retire in October, and the Opposition should stop "disbelieving" this and turning it into a political issue, the Dewan Rakyat was told.

Parliamentary Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Noh Omar said the Opposition should also stop discrediting Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's ability to take over the leadership.

He said this when replying to Wan Nik Wan Yusoff (Pas-Bachok) who asked whether it was true that Dr Mahathir would step down next month.

Speaking to reporters in the lobby, Noh said Pas wanted the rakyat to believe that Dr Mahathir was not sincere in wanting to resign.

He also took a swipe at Pas president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang who raised the issue of the House not being adjourned during the tabling of the 2004 Budget by Dr Mahathir to allow Muslim MPs and officials to perform the Asar prayers.

"If Hadi was sincere and had asked for a break from the Chair, I'm sure the request would have been granted. Instead, he makes an issue of it."