

30 OCT 2003

Mahathir-Deeds

MAHATHIR: I HAVE NO WORRIES IF PEOPLE FORGET ME

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he is not worried if the people forget him after he steps down as prime minister tomorrow.

Quoting a line from Shakespears' play, "Julius Ceasar", Dr Mahathir said: "The evil that men do lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones."

This was received with applause from Umno leaders, including his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, at a news conference after he chaired last Umno supreme council meeting as party president here.

Dr Mahathir was asked how he would feel if people forget him and his deeds following his retirement after being the prime minister for 22 years.

"I have no worries about that. People can forget me...I don't care if people remember me or not," he said.

He said that even when he became prime minister in 1981, he instructed that his picture not to be placed anywhere in the government offices or schools.

"They respected (his directive) (but) after some time they put my picture anyway," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that when he was the Education Minister, the first thing he did was to order schools not to be named after him or any living persons especially, politicians and the education minister, except the sultans.

Asked to comment on the plan by the opposition parties to file police reports nationwide against him after his retirement for what they alleged as misconduct and abuse of power, he said: "If I've done something criminal, they can take me to court."

Abdullah, who was asked if Umno would defend Dr Mahathir should the opposition parties go ahead with the move, said: "We will defend him since

he has been our leader."

Abdullah will succeed Dr Mahathir as prime minister and become the acting Umno president.

-- BERNAMA

HK MAM AZZ JK