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Parliament-Mahathir

PRAISES FOR DR MAHATHIR'S 15-YEAR-SERVICE AS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, July 16 (Bernama) -- Government Backbenchers Club chairman Ruhanie Ahmad (BN-Parit Sulong) heaped accolade on Prime Minister

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who completed 15 years of leading the government today.

"Dr Mahathir is now recognised as leader of the Malaysian people...his leadership is always inspiring and all the people, irrespective of race or religion, constantly yearn for his presence," he said when debating the Supplementary Supply Bill 1996 in the Dewan Rakyat here today.

He said the 15 years appeared short because of Dr Mahathir's refreshing and dynamic leadership which acted as a catalyst for Malaysia's development and drive for excellence.

Ruhanie said that a former western diplomat, M.S Dobbs-Higginson, had noted in his book "Asia Pacific, Its Roles In The New Disorder", that Dr Mahathir was a respected world leader with broad vision who was carving a name for himself on the world diplomatic map.

The Islamic Development Bank president, Dr Usamah al Faqih, had said that Malaysia, under Dr Mahathir's leadership, was a progressive Islamic country and had succeed in promoting the image of Islam in the eyes of the world community, he added.

At the same time Dr Mahathir was constantly attacked, slandered and sometimes ridiculed by some members of the western media, he said.

However, Asiaweek, in its July 5, 1996, issue had ranked Dr Mahathir as the fourth most influential leader in Asia out of a list of 50 leaders, he added.

To Umno, Dr Mahathir was linked with uniting the members and strengthening the party, he said, adding that the prime minister had succeeded in curbing the political wave that threatened the party and the Malays.

Ruhanie said Dr Mahathir's ideas were always relevant, refreshing and

compatible with the national reform movement.

"Dr Mahathir has achieved these successes because he is a highly disciplined person and one who is dedicated to the religion, race and motherland," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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