

Tun M makes first public appearance since hospitalisation

PETALING JAYA: Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad made his first public appearance since being hospitalised, stepping out 22 days after his fall at home for a quiet coffee at Pavilion Damansara Heights yesterday.

The 100-year-old statesman, dressed in a short-sleeved collared shirt and traditional *kain pelekot*, was seen in a wheelchair at a cafe inside the shopping mall.

His press secretary, Sufi Yusoff, described the outing as an important milestone in Mahathir's recovery.

"He's out having coffee at Pavilion Damansara. It's his first public outing, 22 days after his admission," Sufi said.

According to an official health update from Mahathir's office, he was accompanied by his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, National Heart Institute (UN) chief executive officer Prof Datuk Sri Dr Mohamed Ezani Md Taib and medical officers from IJN.

The group spent around 40 minutes at the cafe, where Mahathir chose to enjoy a glass of iced chocolate - a small but symbolic gesture marking his first outing since being admitted for treatment and rehabilitation.

Mahathir had been admitted to IJN on Jan 6 following a fall at his residence at The Mines, which caused a fracture to his right hip.

After consultations with specialists from IJN, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Hospital and Kuala Lumpur Hospital, physiotherapy without surgery was deemed the safest approach.

He is expected to undergo a lengthy recovery process.



COFFEE COMEBACK... Mahathir, accompanied by Siti Hasmah, Mohamed Ezani and medical officers from UN, enjoying a cafe outing at Pavilion Damansara Heights yesterday.- PIC COURTESY OF DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD FACEBOOK PAGE

The health update also confirmed that Mahathir has not yet been allowed to return home and will continue receiving treatment at

UN, with visitation limited to immediate family only.

Though closely assisted during the outing, his appearance offered

reassurance to supporters and the public who have been closely monitoring updates on his condition. - By *Kirtinee Ramesh*