

Dr M to give Umno assembly a miss

KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will not be attending the Umno General Assembly which starts tomorrow.

The former party president, who is being treated at the National Heart Institute, said he would not be present because he planned to take a complete rest for several weeks.

"I want to rest. No statements. I hope the assembly runs smoothly," he said in an interview at the insti-

tute yesterday, two days after he complained of chest pains and was admitted.

Dr Mahathir appeared in high spirits although he seemed weak during the 20-minute interview. With him throughout the interview was his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Dr Mahathir said it was fortunate that he had sought immediate treatment as soon as he had the mild

heart attack.

He said this had enabled the specialist doctors to dilute the blood clot in his coronary artery.

"The heart attack was mild but I came early, three hours after the attack. They (the doctors) managed to dilute the clot and there was no blockage.

"It is just that I have to rest for at least three weeks so that the dam-

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Dr M thanks Pak Lah for showing deep concern

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age (to the artery) can heal. So far, so good. I don't want to think of anything else," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who will be 81 next month, had undergone a coronary bypass operation at the institute in 1989.

He had gone for regular check-ups and the last time he was admitted to the institute was in December last year for a follow-up treatment.

Dr Mahathir said doctors had advised him to rest completely and not to undertake any activity or think of anything that could affect his health.

"The doctors advised me not to be

active, do light exercise and to watch my diet. I feel like writing but they advised me against it," he said.

He said he thought of bringing his bag to do some work but doctors had told him not to do so.

"We have to obey the doctors' order," he said.

Recalling his tight schedule, Dr Mahathir said he went horse riding in the morning of Nov 4 and then flew to Saudi Arabia.

Arriving at 11pm Malaysian time, he attended a function graced by the Saudi King and then flew back eight hours later.

One and a half hours after arriving in

Malaysia, he attended the official opening of a company and attended a dinner until midnight. He only went to bed at 1am.

At 8am, he flew to New Zealand and arrived at 11pm local time. He gave three speeches and a press conference there which took up the whole day.

He arrived in Malaysia at 5pm on Wednesday and two hours later, attended his son's Hari Raya open house until 11.30pm. When he went to bed, he felt chest pains.

Dr Mahathir thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who visited him on the day he was admitted, for his deep concern.

Others who visited him were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Dr Siti Hasmah said she did not panic over Dr Mahathir's condition because it was not the first time that her husband had suffered a heart attack.

"Compared to my experience in 1989 when Tun had his first heart attack, the situation this time was less severe.

"Previously I was rather panicky. This time, I already knew what to do," she said, adding that she called Datuk Dr Nasir Muda from the institute to come to the house the moment it happened. — Bernama