

Tradition and Umno constitution as 'guide'

NST 2.3 APR 1984

KUALA SELANGOR, Sun. — Umno leaders and members were today told to use the party's constitution and also the traditions and customs of the Malays to guide their actions.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the constitution was formulated to guide the actions of its members.

If there was no constitution, members might resort to undesirable actions that could weaken and ultimately destroy the party.

However, the Umno president stressed that it was not possible for the constitution to go-

vern nil the actions of its members.

"That is why, apart from the party's constitution, it is also necessary that party members abide by the traditions and customs of the Malays."

"As a matter of fact, it is also inconceivable for the country's constitution to govern all aspects of the people's behaviour," he added when opening the Kuala Selangor Umno division meeting here. He also declared open the division's building.

The Prime Minister explained that there were things which Umno members did

which were not, subject to the party's constitution but to traditions.

"For instance, the way we dress. Although, the constitution does not spell out the type of dress we should wear during Umno meetings, we normally wear a formal dress and not a sarong because tradition and right thinking tell us so."

Dr Mahathir said that the same applied to party contests.

"If any member wishes to contest, the constitution does not bar him from doing so, but members must de-

cide whether there is a need for such a contest".

However, he pointed out if one harboured had intentions, he might be supported but with high premium on party unit.

He said a member had to think deeply before deciding to contest.

"There are no restrictions... but we have full confidence in the wisdom of the members."

Dr Mahathir also said that Umno was strong not because of its constitution alone but because its leaders and members were wise in making decisions.