

# Umno's wavering few

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JITRA, Sat. — The Prime Minister expressed fears today that some Umno members were likely to cross over to "another party" should Umno be beaten in elections.

"We already have proof of this," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is Umno president. "Certain leaders were bought over when the ruling party lost in a recent election."

He was, he said at the opening of his Kubang Pasu

Umno divisional meeting, disturbed by such "unhealthy" trend.

Party members and Malays in general, he added, should learn to make sacrifices for the good of the party in order to unite and strengthen Umno.

Members should always be prepared to withdraw as candidates for positions within the party if they thought their participation would cause harm, disunity or chaos within the party.

"There will be no more trouble in the party and we will be able to unite and work collectively to win the next general election again if members are sincere," he added.

He said Umno members should stop considering Umno "as a winning horse" and join the party just for personal gain.

"Many members are out to win positions with dreams of becoming Assemblymen or MPs in the next general election," he said. "I am worried that such a trend will only see the party's downfall."

Dr Mahathir reiterated that he was prepared to step down (as Umno president) if party members felt he was too old to carry on as an effective leader.

"I am already 60 years old..." he said. "... I will abide by the decision of the majority. You have my as-

surance that I will not hold a grudge but will fully support whoever is chosen to replace me."

Dr Mahathir said that a leader could only be effective if he had the support of the majority.

"And, it is only proper that any leader who has lost the support of the people should step down.

"There is no point in using unhealthy tactics such as vote-buying and hurling accusations."

Dr Mahathir also expressed regret that some Opposition parties had abused the democratic concept of the country.

He also called on the Malays to be more independent instead of relying on the Government all the time.

"In countries like Finland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden, the people try as far as possible not to turn to their Governments for help but this attitude is the reverse in Malaysia.

"Unless the Malays stand up from now to strive to improve their living standards, we might lose respect among the other races and end up as a backward community.

"Today is the 39th anniversary of Umno's formation and we must now seriously start working to maintain the solidarity of the party," he added.