

PM: Strength lies in unity

Threat to party from 'traitors'

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IPOH, Fri. — Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today branded party members who disrupt unity as traitors to Malays and the party.

He said the actions of these people would destroy the Malays and Umno as unity was the basis of the strength of the race and the party.

Dr Mahathir also called on the 1.4 million Umno members to revive the pre-Merdeka spirit of unity in the party. He was here to open the Bangunan Maju Umno.

He said leaders then were highly respected by the Malays as they acted as spokesmen for them. Respect was the only thing the leaders got in return then.

"They had to use their money for the party's struggle. Datuk Onn and Tunku Abdul Rahman spent their own money as the Malays were poor then. They could not even

By JERRY FRANCIS
and RASLAN BAHAROM

pay their membership fees.

"No one scrambled for this job or that job as the leadership was considered a service to the rakyat."

Dr Mahathir said times had changed since. Those in high positions now benefited materially.

Resounding victory

"Perhaps, this may be the reason for the challenge to the leadership ... if there is any," he said.

The Prime Minister said Umno was handed down from the past generation and it was the responsibility of present party leaders to ensure that this "inheritance" was passed on to future generations.

"The party is an umbrella for the Malays. For the sake of our children, please don't tear it to pieces."

He also hit out at certain leaders who were "singing to the tune" of the Opposition.

He said about eight months ago, during the general election, various allegations were made against the party.

However, despite the allegations, Umno won without losing a single seat in Peninsular Malaysia.

It showed Umno was strong. It would otherwise not have achieved a resounding victory.

But now, he said, the same allegations used by the Opposition were being used "against us by our own people".

"We begin to wonder where these people belong to," Dr Mahathir said.

He said if the present leaders were not living up to the expectations of the Malays, they should step down. But Umno had achieved good results and the economy, too,

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PERAK M.B.
LEADS BIG
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was recovering.

Earlier, the Prime Minister was given a big welcome on his arrival at the airport. He was met by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ramli Ngah Talib and other party leaders.

A motorcade of 41 Proton Sagas and 133 motorcycles, which represented the number of years of Umno existence and the number of divisions, accompanied him to Jalan Sultan Idris Shah which was filled with people bearing banners and flags.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir walked the one kilometre to the Bangunan Maju Umno preceded by *bunga mangga* and *kompang* groups.

The whole length of the street was blocked as thousands of people who had gathered at the building more than an hour before his arrival.

About 20 closed-circuit television sets were installed along the five-foot way for those who could not get close enough to witness the ceremony.

As he took the rostrum after the Menteri Besar's speech, there were shouts of "hidup Mahathir" from the crowd.