

PM: Group out to disrupt party

PENANG, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said a group of Umno members had abused the freedom provided by the party's democratic system to obstruct the running of the party.

The Umno president said some members had forgotten the aims of the party and did not hesitate to destroy the party.

"The are now some ambitious members in the party who are so preoccupied with achieving success that they are willing to destroy the party," he said at a din-

ner organised by the Penang Umno.

More than 1,500 people including Umno vice-presidents Anwar Ibrahim and Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Deputy Finance Minister Senator Farid Ariffin and Chief Minister Dr Lim Chong Eu attended.

The dinner was held in conjunction with the three-day official visit of the Prime Minister to the State.

Dr Mahathir said although Umno practised democracy, the system had its limits and that rules needed to be followed for democra-

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ing the country," he said. He said he was aware that there was still "anger on both sides" after the party elections, but he advised members to put them aside and to close ranks.

Members, he said, should not forget their responsibilities and should not let emotions rule their actions.

Dr Mahathir said if this group succeeded in its suit, other members might take similar action in future.

"The party will then have to concentrate its energy and time defending its position instead of administer-

ing the country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said democracy had failed in many independent countries because the people did not understand its meaning and its limits.

He said his current visit to the various States was to explain to members the problems faced by the party.

He said the minority should not impose their will on the majority and that the minority should accept whatever decision decided by the majority.

Set aside racial differences, says Mahathir

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THE similarities in various aspects among the communities can form the basis for the strengthening of relations among the people, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said that while there are some differences among the communities, "there is no 100 per cent difference among us. There are many similarities."

In efforts to forge good relationship among the communities, attention should be focused on the similarities, putting aside the differences, he said.

"The best area to cement good relationship is among children," he said when unveiling a billboard promoting good neighbourliness, donated by Public Bank Bhd at Bandar Tun Razak in Kuala Lumpur.

Children are born without any prejudice and for them there is no such thing as race or community, he said, adding that children are happy to make friends with those of other communities.

The Prime Minister was confident that if friendship among

the children was strengthened and talk of differences minimised, it would be easier for them to be more friendly and good to those of their own age.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said they would then grow up with full understanding of the differences and similarities of the people and would find it easy to adapt to the multi-racialism of the nation.

This situation would not come about on its own, he said, and added that the older people had a role in instilling and nourishing the spirit of good relationship among children.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government gave serious attention to the promoting of good neighbourliness and encouraged the spirit of gotong royong and mutual help among the people.

He said efforts towards this direction did not have the desired results because of the lukewarm response from the people and their failure to understand the importance of good neighbourliness.

He hoped the billboard would serve as a reminder to all quarters on the importance of being good to one's neighbours, irrespective of race or religion.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir commended Public Bank for complementing government efforts in promoting good neighbourliness.

Eighteen more such boards will be put in various parts of the country.