

Dr Mahathir welcomes High Court decision

MSI 15 APR 1988

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — New Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last night welcomed the High Court's decision dismissing a suit filed by two former Prime Ministers and a Cabinet Minister, which among other things, sought to stop the new party from functioning.

Mr Justice Ajaib Singh rejected the application for interim injunctions sought by former Prime Ministers Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Hussein Onn and former Agriculture Minister Datuk Manan Othman.

They asked the court for an order restraining new Umno from recruiting members as well as conducting any transaction to transfer the assets of the de-registered Umno.

Dr Mahathir said he believed the opponents of new Umno would not be contented with the court decision and that they would continue to institute legal actions "against us."

He said that new Umno was ready to face these challenges because "this is what our attitude should be if we want the party to lead the country."

"We should not fear these

challenges because our intention is to lead the country in the interests of the people," he told newsmen after chairing a four-hour extraordinary general meeting and a separate Supreme Council session at the party headquarters here.

Dr Mahathir said new Umno had no plan to amend the party constitution to stop members from going to the courts to resolve internal matters.

He said the Supreme Council felt that existing party channels of resolving issues were effective and sufficient.

However, he said the party could not stop its members if they did not want to utilise fully these channels and instead, turn to the courts as had happened in the de-registered Umno.

On the recruitment exercise, he said it was still not possible to say how many Malays had been accepted as members.

So far, only the 34 members of Supreme Council and Johore State Assemblyman Datuk Yunus Sulaiman have been officially been accepted as members.