

Mahathir: Umno was STAR, 13 MAY 1988 already illegal in 1984

By P.K. POH

ALOR STAR, Thurs. — Umno was already unlawful in 1984 because it had illegal branches even then, ~~Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir~~ Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister and Umno Baru president said it was not just during the 1987 general assembly that Umno had illegal branches.

Dr Mahathir, speaking to reporters at the Kepala Batas airport before leaving for Kuala Lumpur after a one-day visit to his Kubang Pasu constituency, said:

"The High Court had (on Feb 4) declared Umno unlawful because of illegal branches.

"Since such branches existed even before the last general assembly, the party had been illegal even before 1987.

"In fact, such branches were also in existence in 1984."

He said that under such circumstances, the party's previous supreme councils were also unlawful. "How then can the old Umno be revived?"

Dr Mahathir said Umno Baru lawyers were studying the High Court decision because "there is some confusion."

"It looks like the court also has second thoughts over the issue. Umno was declared unlawful at first but there were also implications later of its legality earlier."

He said this was surprising and it was impossible for Umno to be only unlawful at the party's last general assembly on April 24, 1987.

He said he regretted that the old Umno had been declared unlawful because of the actions of certain people.

He said Umno's fate had in the past always been decided by its members but this situation changed recently because of the attempt by certain people to grab power in the party.