

No revival possible for old Umno: Dr M

NSum
22 MAY 1988
KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said he is absolutely sure that the old Umno "can never be revived" unless the law is disregarded.

He said there is no provision in the law under which the old Umno could be revived.

However, he said the written judgment delivered by Justice Datuk Harun Hashim, who first declared Umno as an unlawful party in his oral judgment on Feb 4, had "additional passages which coloured" the earlier (oral) judgment, giving the impression that the old Umno could be revived.

The written judgment had spurred some supporters of former Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah to take court actions to revive the old party, he added.

Dr Mahathir said it was unfortunate that the written judgment had been used as a "political tool" because it made people

who were not in tune with the finer points of law, to wrongly believe that the old Umno could be revived.

He said before the delivery of the written judgment, there was no indication that efforts could be made to revive the old party.

The 11 Umno members who first asked the High Court to declare Umno's 1987 general assembly as void were now appealing against the Feb 4 judgment in the Supreme Court while seven cases were now pending to challenge the validity of Umno Baru, he said.

"Our lawyers are now working towards a stand to defend the validity of Umno Baru in the court hearing," he added.

He said Justice Datuk Harun had turned the matter into a serious one.

However, he said the situation would not deter the party from functioning because regardless of the outcome of any court proceedings, "Umno Baru will con-

tinue as it is now."

He said the party was not about to "waste its time" dealing with the plaintiffs because there was "no merit" in what they were doing.

"Their actions are only to pull wool over the eyes of the people," he added.

Asked how he was going to deal with the 11 plaintiffs, Dr Mahathir said the country, being democratic, allowed them take any form of action and "there is little we can do to stop them."

However, he said as far as he was concerned, the problems which had plagued Umno were solved a long time ago.

He said the problems they faced now was "not our fault" because it was the work of "frustrated" people.

"Morally, we are still the rightful leaders of the party unless the Supreme Court decides otherwise," he added.