

# *No other party can champion our cause: Dr M*

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — New Umno president ~~Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad~~ tonight dismissed claims by his opponents that the struggle of the Malays could be championed by another Malay-based political party.

He said: "This is impossible. Umno Baru is the only alternative if the Malays want to continue the struggle initiated since 1946."

He also dismissed claims that Malays had become disunited following the crisis in the old Umno, adding that "disunity was only in the minds of those who have lost power."

"Generally, the Malays are becoming even more united than before behind Umno Baru," he told a dinner gathering attended by some 2,200 Malayan Union veterans at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

"This is because they know that the struggle of the Malays which started in 1946 is not yet complete; there is a lot more of work to be done," said Dr Mahathir who is also the Prime Minister.

He said the growing membership of Umno Baru which to date stood at almost 940,000 and expected to top one million by the time the party held its inaugural general assembly here in October was evidence of the unity of the Malays.

Dr Mahathir said he was confident that the Malays understood Umno Baru's struggle to continue to put the race on equal footing with the other races in the country and would continue to support the party.

"Umno Baru, in continuing the struggle of the old Umno, wants to see the Malays as a respected and successful race, looked upon by others with awe and admiration.

"This is why we cannot allow a small group of people to disunite the Malays."

Referring to the Malay Union veterans, Dr Mahathir said that they had no weapons nor were they economically powerful when they decided to take on the British during 1946 in protest

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# WE MUST STAND FIRM AND UNITED, SAYS DR M

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against the Malayan Union issue.

"Their weapon was only their unity to rally behind Umno to champion the cause of the Malays," he said.

"This unity is also reason why Malays must today stand firm behind Umno Baru as it fights to uphold the cause of the Malays in the coming years especially with the completion of the New Economic Policy by 1990."

Speaking on behalf of the veterans, Datuk Aziz Tapa urged Dr Mahathir to ignore attempts by certain quarters to pressure him to step down as Prime Minister or efforts to remove him as Umno president.

Pledging the support of the veterans, he said that these quarters should be treated as no more than "mischievous pranksters" who would eventually realise the folly of their actions.

"In the meantime, the party president and the Prime Minister should carry on leading the Malays and the nation to greater heights of achievement and prosperity," he added, to the shouts of "*Hidup Mahathir*".