

PM criticises group which split Malays

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By NURAINA SAMAD

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today those who had caused disunity among the Malays and in Umno were not grateful for what had been achieved through Malay unity.

He said that it was the unity of the Malays, achieved through the struggle of Umno, that had saved and protected the community.

"It looks like we have already forgotten our good fortune whereby our unity has succeeded in saving us," he told reporters after recording his Hari Raya Puasa message to the nation at Angkasapuri here.

Dr Mahathir, who is the Umno president, said: "When we forget our good fortune, we regard what we have now as something ordinary. We will then be less grateful. When that happens, we do not sustain that which had given us protection . . . which is the unity of the Malays through Umno. This had saved us."

He said that if the Malays did not protect unity and Umno, they might risk being exposed to other dangers and might even lose everything that they had won through Umno.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on yesterday's Seremban High Court decision setting aside an injunction to stop Umno from celebrating its 43rd anniversary celebrations in Johore Baru next week.

"We knew we would win the case. It is just that the other side had taken action which brought no benefit.

"If they really want to revive

the spirit of 1946, then it is by celebrating the anniversary of the founding of Umno on May 11. We are not preventing anyone from celebrating the occasion."

Dr Mahathir said that because of the attempt to stop the celebration, Umno members would turn up "full-spirited" and in large numbers to celebrate "this sacred day".

He also said there were people who did not know the history of Malay unity.

"They only see Umno as a tool to serve their interests. And that is why we have this split among the Malays and among Umno members.

"If they are really aware of the spirit of 1946, the year Umno was founded, this (disunity) will not happen," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that it could also be because many of the young people now were either too young or were not even born at the time the Malays were fighting for Umno.

He said that they did not, therefore, know of the pressures faced by the Malays and the rising spirit then.

"They do not then value and appreciate the unity in the party and are ready to destroy the party, to cause it to become illegal. This is very sad indeed," he added.

Dr Mahathir said he believed that the Malays and Umno members would stand more united after the celebrations on May 11.

"On that day, we will all commemorate the birth of Umno. For the old and the young, it will be to remember the desperate times faced by the Malays."