

PM: Only Umno can safeguard Malay interests

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The fate of the Malay race, religion and the nation will continue to be safeguarded so long as Umno struggles for the Malays and gets their strong support, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said Umno, the political party with the biggest membership — which was still increasing, was the most respected party in Malaysia now and would remain so in the future.

He said this in his welcoming message in the souvenir programme for the 43rd anniversary celebrations of Umno to be held at the Istana Besar grounds in Johore Baru on Wednesday and Thursday.

Dr Mahathir said Umno was not free from challenges but these had been overcome with the prayers and support of members who loved the party.

He said the party was formed 43 years ago out of the need for Malays to unite and oppose the colonialists and the Malayan Union proposal as well as to fight for the country's independence.

"The unity then in struggling

for the rights and interests of the religion, race and nation had given the Malays the strength and encouragement to make sacrifices for the sake of achieving their noble aims," he added.

"The strong will had made it easier for the sacrifices and the success achieved belongs to us all. Such is the blessing for the Malays."

In his message, Umno deputy president Encik Ghafar Baba said the success of Umno was achieved not only through the consensus existing among the Malays but all races in the country.

Encik Ghafar, who is the Deputy Prime Minister, said the country would be safe and development intensified if this unity was maintained.

Umno would continue with its struggle to make Malaysia more well known internationally in all fields, he said.

He called for a renewal of the determination to strengthen the party so that Malaysia would continue to be safe and progressive. — Bernama