

Ensure Umno stays strong, Dr M tells members

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Umno members should preserve the integrity of the party and ensure that it remains strong, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister, who is the Umno president, gave this advice during a meeting with heads and secretaries of Umno divisions and Youth and Wanita wings at the Putra World Trade Centre.

Replying to questions at a Press conference after the meeting, Dr Mahathir said he had advised members to en-

sure that efforts to rebuild and restore the party were successful.

"We must not forget that our objective is not to demonstrate the practice of democracy but to show that through democracy, we can build a successful and effective party," he said.

Dr Mahathir also advised members to avoid any problems that would cause the party to be de-registered.

"We don't want that to recur ... because of one or two persons, the efforts of some 1.4 million people are adversely affected," he said.

He said although the leadership

would not stop anyone from contesting any posts, it would nevertheless "offer them advice".

During the one-and-a-half hour meeting, Dr Mahathir also handed to the divisional heads the final list of Umno members who were registered before March 31.

They are eligible to take part and contest posts at branch and divisional meetings. Those who are registered after the deadline can attend branch and divisional meetings but cannot take part.

On Umno members, Dr Mahathir

said that they were "wise and rational" people who loved the party.

"That is why they willingly re-registered as Umno members as soon as possible. They have come to strengthen the party and I am confident they will be able to do that," he said.

Dr Mahathir expressed the hope that the branch and divisional meetings would be carried out smoothly.

Also present were Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat and Umno information chief Datuk Hussein Ahmad.