

PRIORITY FOR UNITY

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The old and the new in the family of Umno met today as Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad delivered his message of unity.

The Umno president, after welcoming Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Hussein Onn as guests at the opening of the party's general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre, firmly set the tone of reconciliation and the healing of hurts.

"The priority for us is to reunite the Malays in Umno," declared Dr Mahathir amid applause from the 3,000 delegates and observers who packed the Dewan Merdeka.

And, as the crowd clapped its approval, he paid homage to the Tunku as former Umno president, first Prime Minister, Father of Independence, *Bapa Malaysia*, and an elder.

He praised Tunku for his concern for Malay unity, and asked him to help in reconciliation moves.

Dr Mahathir said he was sure that the Tunku would not take sides in mediating efforts, in apparent reference to moves for talks between him and Semangat 46 leader Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

Towards the end of the day's session, word reached the assembly that Tengku Razaleigh was willing to hold talks with Dr Mahathir. Only the date and venue remained to be fixed.

Dr Mahathir's hour-long address, entitled *Kewibawaan Umno* (Umno's Effectiveness)

touched on such subjects as religion, the economy and nation-building.

The speech looked forward to a brave new era, with the Prime Minister referring to the growing population and stressing the need for clear-sighted policies rather than popular ones.

"We are not communist, socialist or capitalist. We take the good and discard the bad. We do not want to be limited by any ideology," the Prime Minister said.

He spoke on the need for Malays to change their attitude if they wanted to succeed in business, and asked them not to accept gratification for short-term profits.

Dr Mahathir also touched on the Government's adherence to Islamic norms while being mindful of the rights of non-Muslims.

The subjects were varied, but the underlying theme was unity, and he kept returning to it in his speech.

He explained why Umno had at first closed its doors to some people, and why it was now confidently inviting all Malays to join the party.

Dr Mahathir said the party had not included some whom it was not sure were interested in restoring Umno to its old position.

"We are no longer worried about accepting everyone even though they might not have the spirit of Umno and of solidarity," he said.

Dr Mahathir ended his speech by a call to patriotism: "This is our flag . . . this is our country, and we stand proud in the world community."