

# PM: I helped Razaleigh become vice-president

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ABDULLAH

KOTA BARU, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he was the one who helped Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah to be appointed Umno vice-president in 1972.

The Prime Minister said he had proposed Tengku Razaleigh to fill the post vacated by the late Tun Hussein Onn, who was chosen to act as deputy president following the death of Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman.

Dr Mahathir said the post would have gone to him (Dr Mahathir) as he had received the highest votes in the Umno election.

"However, Tengku Razaleigh asked that he be nominated for the post.

"I was willing to see him being appointed to the post," he added when addressing 500 Umno veterans at the Perdana Hotel here.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said Tengku Razaleigh had risen to the post because of his (Dr Mahathir)'s sacri-

fice and generosity.

"But when I contested for the vice-president's post, he told delegates from his home State Kelantan not to support me."

He said Tengku Razaleigh had formed Semangat 46 not because he held different ideologies or struggles but because he had failed in his bid for the top party post in 1987.

"If he had won the party presidency in the 1978 general assembly, certainly he would not have formed Semangat 46 or taken Umno to court to have the party declared unlawful," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Tengku Razaleigh had also rejected his offer to be a Minister. "I offered him a Cabinet Minister's post, but he wanted nothing short of the post of Prime Minister."

"Now he is working very hard to destroy Umno," he added.

He said Tengku Razaleigh was now co-operating with Umno's staunchest enemy, the DAP, to weaken the Malays.

Dr Mahathir said Tengku Razaleigh has forgotten that he rose to power because of Umno.

"It was Umno that made him a Minister and it was the party that had enabled the people to enjoy the fruits of development."

Dr Mahathir reminded the Malays that it would be impossible for the race to regain power once they lost it.

He said Malays should unite under Umno to enable the party to continue with its struggles for the Malays.

"We are not finished here. There are a lot of things on our agenda and, therefore, our struggle should continue," he said.