

# DR M: BETTER TO STOP THE CAMPAIGNING NOW

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged candidates in the Umno elections to consider ending their campaign.

"If they can they should consider stopping their campaigns because the situation is getting a little tense," the party president told newsmen after addressing Umno delegates at the Putra World Trade Centre.

"There have been cases of poison-pen letters being sent, libellous books being distributed and dinners being held to woo votes," Dr Mahathir said.

The meeting with delegates was for Dr Mahathir to give his advice before the general assembly starting on Friday.

"My message to them was that assembly and elections should go smoothly and the campaign should be conducted in a proper manner," Dr Mahathir said, adding that he did not know who were responsible for sending poison-pen letters and distributing libellous books, "but I hope the candidates will not forget that they are Umno members."

"They should not allow the contest to affect party unity," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that

members should support whoever won in the contest and those who lost should not distance themselves from the party.

"Unity is important. No one should form any alliance with any leader. Their alliance and support should only be for Umno," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that he cautioned members against some of the

unhealthy campaign tactics being used.

"Although the candidates had heeded my earlier call, there has been some unhealthy campaigning. But it is not as bad as in 1987. And I do not think there will be a repeat of anything like what happened after the elections then," he said.

Asked whether he thought the campaign had

been intense because the contenders were vying to take over leadership of the party within five years, Dr Mahathir said: "Those elected as vice-presidents will not necessarily take over then. In three years, we will have another contest. Even if they win now, it does not mean they will win again. Although, they are the second liners, the dele-

gates can still replace them with others."

On whether he will stay on as Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir replied: "There is no contest (for the presidency). Umno members want me to continue leading the party. If my health allows me, I will continue to lead the party and nation. I am not planning to retire now."