

Dr M: Developed nation in 30 years the target

# Umno to play key role in economy

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Umno has decided to play a leading role in achieving the Government's objective of making Malaysia a developed country by the year 2020, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister, who is also Umno president, said the party's supreme council discussed the objective at its meeting today.

He said the council felt that as the main component party of the ruling Barisan Nasional, Umno had a vital role to play to achieve that goal.

"It is therefore vital that Umno's stability is maintained at all times to ensure the continued existence of a strong and stable Government.

"With the country politically stable, we will be able to achieve our economic objectives much easier," he told reporters after chairing a three-hour meeting of the council at the party's headquarters.

The Prime Minister projected his vision of the country in the year 2020 in his keynote address, "Malaysia: The way forward", at the inaugural meeting of the Malaysian Business Council on Feb 28.

He said then that Malaysia should strive for total development not only in the economic field but in all aspects. The 62-member council endorsed the Prime Minister's vision.

On Umno's expansion to Sabah, Dr Mahathir said the party would adopt certain measures to ensure its smooth entry into the State.

"We are glad to note that Sabah Umno pro tem deputy chief Tun Datu Mustapha Datu Harun is prepared to accept all eligible citizens of Sabah into the party.

"As in Peninsular Malaysia, we will accept anyone who wishes to join Umno although they were once members of other political parties.

"We will also discuss with Tun Mustapha the political developments in Sabah from time to time."

He said the council felt that Tun Mustapha need not vacate his Usukan State seat because he contested in the last State elections under the Barisan Nasional banner.

"He was a BN candidate then and is still a BN member.

"If the Sabah State Government wants to declare his seat vacant just because he has joined Umno, we will go to court to seek the proper and legal interpretation of the Sabah State law which states that those who switch political parties will have to vacate their State or parliamentary seats they had contested previously."

Dr Mahathir also said the supreme council was informed that the Umno general assembly's resolution on the role of the monarchy had been handed to the Rulers.

"The feedback is that the Rulers understand the resolution and they know that we do not want to wipe out the system of constitutional monarchy which is currently practised in the country."

On the out-of-court settlement by the *Far Eastern Economic Review* over its report on the purported sale of Limbang to Brunei, Dr Mahathir said the Government was only interested in the truth and not money.

"We have achieved our main objective that the truth must prevail as the report was baseless.

"What is important to us is that they have admitted that the report was totally baseless," he said.