

BAD OLD

PM: Corruption and abuse are back again

DAYS

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malays seem to be regressing to the old days when corruption and abuse of authority led to their being colonised and enslaved by foreign powers, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said the tendency towards abusing all their powers at every level would weaken the Malays and hamper their progress.

"If this trend continues, I fear that the Malays will be enslaved once more," he said when opening the Umno General Assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre.

mal thing and no one gave any thought to the security of the state and the people's well-being.

Dr Mahathir said this ancient scenario was being replayed in modern Malaysia.

He said some people holding powerful positions in government had succumbed to self-interest and personal ambition.

"Government funds are used to promote themselves in the party so that they will get even higher positions. The ultimate objective is to become the Prime Minister."

Dr Mahathir said there was a former Finance Minister who promised the Selangor government \$3 billion and a banking licence if the state's delegation to the party general assembly voted for him in the supreme council

EXCERPTS OF SPEECH – 19

The Prime Minister harked back to history and talked about how the Malay states fell under the yoke of foreign powers.

He said the Malays themselves at the time — the common people as well as the rulers — were as much to be blamed for their role in weakening the Malay states as the aggression and greed of the invading powers.

He said the administration of the Malay governments before the arrival of the western powers came under select groups of aristocrats who treated the state they ruled as their personal property.

"They regarded all taxes collected as their own and to be spent as they liked," he said.

Because those in power could do as they wished, struggle for power and position became a nor-

elections.

The Malay chamber of commerce in every state was given a finance company licence, he said.

"On-the-spot grants, which are the prerogative of the Prime Minister and his deputy, were used by this minister to make himself popular. Other powers given to the Finance Minister were used by this man to gain support for himself in the Umno elections," he said.

Dr Mahathir said there were government officials and party leaders who were still using this means to project themselves.

He said there were also those who used their wealth that they had gained under the New Economic Policy to buy influence and position in Umno branches and divisions.