

Reject dirty tactics, Umno members told

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By PAUL GABRIEL

ALOR STAR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has cautioned Umno members to be wary of dirty tricks in the run-up to the party elections next year.

The Prime Minister said yesterday those who resorted to money politics, poison-pen letters and bad-mouthing to win support should be rejected.

Although this was not an election year, he urged members not to be influenced by those who were greedy and "restless for power."

"Even if they win, such leaders will not last as members will eventually know their true colour," he added when opening the Kubang Pasu Umno division delegates conference in Jitra.

"There will be a time for those who are sincere and

committed to the party to take over from us, from the divisions right up to the presidency.

"Everyone, including me, will have to step aside some day."

Also present were Mentri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff who is the deputy division head.

Dr Mahathir said those who expected support should back the current leaders. "This is only fair. If they support us now, we will repay when it is their turn (to lead). This also applies to me," he added.

Dr Mahathir who is Umno president, said Umno should set the example of unity by getting those in the splinter groups to join the party as they had been resoundingly rejected in the 1990 general election.

He said Umno was different from PAS which had been

preaching that to support the party was an endorsement of Islam itself and such teachings had created Muslim fanatics in the East Coast.

"In Kelantan, villagers are being told that supporting PAS is tantamount to accepting Islam. Religion has been politicised to the extent of equating a political party to Islam," he said.

"PAS leaders know that once such belief is deep-rooted, it will be difficult to erase.

"Naturally, they are against any attempt by us to spread the true teachings of Islam to the ignorant folk," he said, adding that there was a need for genuine Islamic scholars and *ulamaks* to rectify the situation.

Dr Mahathir said it was ironical that some Western-oriented media which stood against Islamic extremism were now

portraying a positive image of PAS in Kelantan.

He said their writers had gone to Kelantan and written about how moderate the PAS government was while its leaders, who in the past had labelled these magazines anti-Islam, were now full of praise for them.

"The intentions of these outsiders are clear to cause trouble and break up Malaysia as what happened to Soviet Russia and Yugoslavia," he said.

Dr Mahathir said political and economic stability was vital if Malaysia's views in international platforms were to be taken seriously.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was able to speak its mind without fear or favour as it did not allow itself to be manipulated by foreign loans with conditions attached.