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Mahathir-letters

ATTACKING UMNO FROM WITHIN WITH POISON-PEN LETTERS

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XUALA LUMPUR, Nov 8¹⁹² (Bernama) -- Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today poison-pen letters were -being used to attack Umno from within because nothing could threaten the party from the outside.

He advised party members against falling prey to this ploy which he said was aimed at toppling the party.

Describing the writers of the letters as cowards and mischief makers, he said irresponsible groups were attempting to influence Umno members through the letters.

+If they really want to champion the cause of the Malays, Bumiputeras and Islam, they can be open and speak at this assembly,+ he said when winding up debate at the Umno general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir said the distributors of the letters knew that any pressure from outside the party would only bring Umno members closer together, -- more

▼08/11/18-48MST

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Mahathir-letters 2 Kuala Lumpur

He said one could not believe what was mentioned in a poison-pen letter because its intention was evil, which was to weaken the party and disunite party members and leaders.

The issue of the poison-pen letter +Surat Dari Kota+ was a hot topic during the debate at the three-day assembly which was attended by more than 1,700 delegates.

The letter, said to have been circulated widely throughout the country, discredited several senior leaders including Dr Mahathir himself.

Dr Mahathir said he was sad over statement-s by some delegates that the letter was good in the sense that it could serve as an advice to the party leadership.

+Can we believe that a poison-pen letter is circulated with good intention?+ he asked.

+If there is good intention, they must come here, and speak openly. I am sure everyone will support that because we are free (-to speak),+ he said. -- more

▼08/11/19-01MST

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Dr Mahathir said poison-pen letters carried various allegations and what he described as half-truths.

He reminded party members against making wild accusations against any leader, as was mentioned in the letter.

Instead, he said, any criticism levelled at the party leadership such as at this assembly should be with basis.

Dr Mahathir said he noticed that certain issues raised at the assembly had been based on the contents of the poison-pen letter which he himself had also received.

He also reminded delegates of the politics of bribery which he said existed in the party, including at branch level, and which members resorted to in their quest for support. -- more

▼08/11/20-54MST

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Expressing disappointment, he said the practice would prevent Umno from carrying out its duty of championing the cause of the Malays and Bumiputeras.

He said Umno provided certain channels based on democracy for members to become leaders.

Dr Mahathir reminded members to be cautious in exercising democracy so that they elected honest leaders.

+We pick leaders because we want them to work to achieve the objectives of our struggle. We do not pick leaders just to be leaders, after which they just do nothing,+ he said.

He said the system practised by Umno was good because it was based on the voice of the majority.

He said the system of leaders picked by those they led was good because the leaders had to be responsible to those who elected them.

+If they make a mistake, they can be removed,+ he said. -- Bernama

▼08/11/21-10MST