

Muhyiddin: Advice shows he is sincere

PARTY vice-president Muhyiddin Yassin said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's advice to members not to praise him excessively showed that the Prime Minister was a sincere and humble leader.

He said those who wanted to show their appreciation to Dr Mahathir should do so by showing their full commitment to Umno and working hard for the benefit of the party and nation.

Asked on the outcome of the assembly, Muhyiddin said he was happy that all the delegates took interest in religious matters and problems involving youths.

He said the views raised during the debates on religion and social problems were elaborate and would help the Government in carrying out programmes to

overcome the existing social problems involving youths.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohamed Najib Abdul Razak said delegates at this year's assembly were more civil and tolerant and had avoided discussing problems that could be detrimental to the party with the impending general elections.

He said delegates knew it was important to portray an image of unity by refraining from allowing the assembly to become a forum to hit out at party leaders.

This, he said, was to prevent opposition parties "from benefiting from the acrimony within Umno".

"The delegates have shown a very responsible and tolerant attitude as this allowed us to focus on how we should conduct our-

selves and portray a good image to the rakyat," said Najib when asked about his views of this year's assembly.

However, this does not mean whatever problems that exist within the party and the Government will be swept aside. These issues will be discussed at a different and closed forum.

Najib said these issues were mentioned on the surface and would be taken into consideration.

Asked if the party leadership had directed the delegates to avoid those topics, he said it was a general consensus.

"There was a general consensus about this from the party leadership to the grassroots. We could not make it work without the grassroots' unanimous sup-

port.

"However, there were hints of certain things which should be taken into consideration."

Asked about Dr Mahathir's advice against praises and adulation, Najib said it was a sincere opinion by the leader.

"What the Prime Minister wanted was not adulation but respect and love for party leadership and the country."

On Dr Mahathir's explanation of Brutus, Najib said the Prime Minister's mention of the Shakespearean character had left many guessing who he might be referring to.

"He had explained clearly that Brutus existed in us. He meant that we should not provide excuses for our bad deeds."