

Dr M: Some do not understand party struggle

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. -- Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today recent disputes and incidents in the party showed that some members do not have any understanding of the party's struggles.

Maintaining that there seemed to be a general decline in their understanding of their involvement in politics, including in Umno, Dr Mahathir said there were those who became members to achieve personal goals.

He said: "Most of them are newcomers who are not part of the party's early struggles.

"They came into Umno which was already in power and thought that by joining Umno, there was a chance of them becoming Ministers or the Prime Minister," he added.

Asked whether action would be taken against members involved in the disputes, he said such matters would be discussed at the party's supreme council meeting.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on recent disputes and incidents in the elections at the branch and divisional levels.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said yesterday that the party's management commit-

tee chairman Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had decided to suspend the annual general meetings of five divisions till their internal problems had been resolved.

Asked to comment on the Tapah Umno division office which was damaged when 30 men, believed to be party members, went on a rampage on Saturday, Dr Mahathir said: "It shows that they do not understand at all the reason they are in the party ... why the fights?"

By right, politicians were enslaved to politics, and should serve the party and the people and not jostle for positions in the party, he said.

"And if there are those who come into the party aspiring to hold positions such as *wakil rakyat* (elected representatives) or division heads, that itself showed that they are unsuitable," he said after opening the one-day *National Summit on Achieving Zero Inflation* at the Putra World Trade Centre.

He said it would be better for those who felt they could not achieve their personal targets to leave.

He added the bottom line was the spirit and understanding on why they were in Umno.