

# Return to mainstay party values, Umno told

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KUALA LUMPUR Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told Umno members to return to, and uphold, the values which were the mainstay of the party's struggle and which they inherited from their predecessors.

The Umno president said the party was now in a strong position because previous leaders and members had developed and moulded the party's growth sincerely and with a strong sense of sacrifice.

"At a time when the party is approaching its 50th year, I appeal to all Umno members to do so," Dr Mahathir said in his message to delegates and members before the party's annual general assembly which begins on Friday.

The assembly is preceded by the assemblies of the Youth and Wanita wings on Thursday.

Dr Mahathir said: "We should maintain, be committed and loyal to the tradition which we inherited from past leaders. It is on this tradition and heritage that we should build our future."

The Prime Minister said the nation was moving towards Vision 2020 on the foundation and development achieved by the previous generation. "The previous generation should serve as an inspiration to drive us to bigger successes in the future."

Dr Mahathir said as a political party, Umno was not free from weaknesses and shortcomings. Umno members, he added, should work at all times to make Umno a complete party and endeavour to make it an example for others.

As a party in power, Umno had always attracted the people's attention.

He said: "As such, each and every one of our activities should not only be an example for members but also for the people.

"We have to be conscious that since Umno's inception to the present day, the people regard Umno as their backbone to fulfil their destinies and lead the country towards a bright future.

"A leader is a beacon to his people. If his conduct is considered improper by the people, then he is no longer fit to be their beacon.

"We have to display leadership qualities if we are to earn the unanimous support and loyalty of the people. Leaders have to be clean, sincere and willing to sacrifice for the benefit of

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# Nation's progress hinges on sacrifice, hard work

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the people."

He said past leaders received the support of the people because of their integrity and sincerity.

"If this is not the case, then it will be impossible that their deeds be remembered to this day. The nation and our community could achieve remarkable progress because generally, party leaders and members have struggled sincerely for the people," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno had always held steadfastly to values which gave priority to togetherness, well-being of families and the majority. "Values which enabled leaders and followers to foster understanding and build a sense of direction to achieve the ambitions of community, race and country."

He said human beings should not forget the legacy of their parents.

"Similarly as a party, we cannot forget what we have inherited from our past leaders. If we do not subscribe to the noble values bequeathed by our previous leaders, our rich culture will certainly become extinct."

He said the key to Umno's success in becoming the largest and leading party in the country could be attributed to the priority given by its leaders to ensure the unity and stability of community, religion and nation.

Dr Mahathir added that Umno leaders implemented political, economic, cultural and social policies which were pragmatic and based on promoting harmony and

prosperity of the people.

"This, in reality, is our heritage from our past leaders — of giving importance to the community, religion and nation and not to self-interest or one's own group."

Dr Mahathir said it was necessary and appropriate that members reaffirmed the footsteps and deeds of past leaders.

"We represent one of the countries in the world which has progressed in all fields. Our nation has become a model to other developing countries and are facing the future with full confidence.

"However, we should not forget our history. We began as a small party with much lacking. But the inadequacies did not prevent us from forging ahead until we became a party which wrested independence for the nation and developed it."

Dr Mahathir said the members should not forget that when the party was formed the Malays were poor and backward and did not have a leader among them who was rich.

"Our members were farmers, fishermen, workers and Malay teachers. Despite our poverty and backwardness then, we were able to muster the people to sacrifice for a noble cause — independence. The values of integrity, sincerity, the spirit of sacrifice and co-operation are the true secrets of our success.

"Actually this is what I mean when I exhort Umno members who contest in party elections to do so not for their selfish ends but for

the benefit of party, community, religion and nation.

"We are enjoying the fruits of the struggle of past party leaders and members. But we should not be intoxicated by our successes.

"We should not forget that at one time we were a poor and backward race. We should not forget our roots because we now live in luxury and prosperity. We should not forget our history or we will be like a kite that has snapped its string."

He said history had taught that strong governments and mighty empires had fallen because their people and leaders became complacent with prosperity and abundance.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had become the focus of the world and what it did drew the attention of the foreign media.

"Our shortcomings are blown out of proportion. They claim every problem we face is a sign of our decline. They do not highlight our achievements; only any negative aspects. They are envious of our economic progress and dynamic development which has surpassed the performance of their own countries."

He said the people should realise that the development achieved so far was the result of their own sacrifice and hard work.

"The harmony among the various races is the most important factor which has enabled us to enjoy political stability. This stability has enabled us to achieve our current economic performance."