

12 OCT 1996  
Umno-Concluded  
UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENDS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- The three-day Umno General Assembly 1996 ended this afternoon after seeing several interesting and surprising moments, one of which will surely be embedded in the minds of the Malays.

The assembly was preceded on Wednesday by the annual conferences of the Umno Youth and Wanita Umno.

It ended sharp at 6pm, after the singing of the Umno song and the national anthem.

Earlier, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wound up the debate.

As usual at the moment of parting, the delegates shook hands with each other and with the leaders.

The highlight of the assembly was, of course, the party elections including for the Youth and Wanita wings.

But the most unforgettable moment was when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad could not hold back his tears while presenting the presidential address.

This occurred while he was entreating Umno members to love their race, religion and country at a time when the party is being threatened by money politics, corruption and abuse of position.

Many of those present in the Dewan Merdeka of Putra World Trade Centre, where the general assembly was held, were moved to tears. So did others who watched the presidential address on closed-circuit television.

The general assembly this time saw the election of Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhd Taib as vice-presidents.

The posts of president and deputy president were not contested.

The Umno Youth and Wanita Umno elections saw changes in the top leadership.

Bank Simpanan Nasional chairman Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi succeeded former Melaka Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik as Youth leader.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman was elected Wanita head, ending International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz's 12-year hold on the Wanita wing.

A total of 1,871 delegates including 1,767 from 164 Umno divisions attended this year's general assembly.

The largest political gathering of the year in Malaysia was also attended by Cambodian Co-Prime Ministers Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen, representatives of the Laos Revolutionary Party, Singapore Malay National Party and 23 Umno Clubs.

The delegates debated a motion of thanks to Dr Mahathir for his presidential address and two resolutions on education and religion.

Many delegates expressed concern over the influence of money politics and urged immediate actions to curb it. They were also worried over the poor performance of Malay students in the sciences and mathematics as well as the social problems affecting Malay society at present.

Umno has almost 2.7 million members. -- BERNAMA

MAM MAI ABG