

29 AUG 1997

Mahathir-Umno

GIVE IMPORTANCE TO PARTY, UMNO MEMBERS AND LEADERS TOLD

PASIR PUTEH, Aug 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today told Umno members and leaders in Kelantan to put aside personal interest and give importance to Umno's struggles.

He said those with personal interest would be a problem to the party.

"The truth is not that an opposition party is strong but that of problem within our party, of not agreeing to the choice of candidate or of in-fighting between local leaders," he told reporters after addressing about 10,000-strong rally at the school padang of Sekolah Menengah Cherang Ruku, Semerak near here.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Kelantan Umno Liaison Chief, was asked whether he was satisfied with the spirit of unity shown by Umno members and leaders in the state, a factor attributed to the Umno's success in capturing Pas' stronghold in the Semerak state by-election last Aug 11.

He said Umno members and leaders should give importance to unity because it could help the party to emerge victorious.

"We can see that when there is unity, we can win like in the Semerak by-election," he said.

He hoped that the Barisan Nasional (BN)'s victory in Semerak could also be repeated in other constituencies in Kelantan.

Asked about the Semerak Declaration, outlining Kelantan BN's determination to recapture Kelantan from Pas, Dr Mahathir said it was a declaration for change of situation, of attitude and of approach towards success.

"If we want something to be a success but we still stick to doing things the old ways, naturally it will not be a success," he said.

As such, he said there was a need to change unsuitable approach held by Umno members and leaders. --BERNAMA

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