

18 JUN 1999

Umno-Debate (Father)

FATHER OF ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE TITLE FOR DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 (Bernama) -- Melaka Umno today proposed that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad be accorded the title of "Father of Malaysia's Economic Independence" for his wisdom in developing the economy and in refusing to seek International Monetary Fund (IMF) help in overcoming the financial crisis.

Melaka Umno delegate Nawawi Ahmad said Dr Mahathir, who is party president, ought to be honoured as even the people of Thailand hold the Malaysian Prime Minister in high esteem for his ability to defend Malaysia's sovereignty.

Debating the party president's policy address in the 53rd Umno general assembly here, he said IMF assistance to Thailand has had an adverse effect on the lives of the people there.

"Is it appropriate that we in this Merdeka hall adopt a different attitude?

"As such, Melaka Umno would like to accord the title of Father of Malaysia's Economic Independence to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir," he said to loud applause from the delegates.

Nawawi also outlined six steps to be taken by members to strengthen Umno for the upcoming general election.

These are:

- + to close ranks and to forget past squabbles,
- + to cut out negative criticism of each other,
- + to practice democracy and to accept any result in party elections in good faith,
- + to place the party above self or group or state interests,
- + to adopt the party's struggles as one's own and to take quick action against any breach, and
- + to always think positive.

-- BERNAMA

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