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Umno-Abdullah

UMNO SHOULD CREATE NEW IMAGE

KUALA LUMPUR, June 15 (Bernama) -- Umno must create a new image so that its young leaders will be closer to the grassroots, professionals, Malay youths and students, said Malaysian Special Envoy to the United Nations Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad.

By doing so, he said, the perception spread by the opposition as though Umno under the present leadership was only meant for certain groups could be corrected.

Although there are those among the younger generation who feel that way, the people should not be influenced by such a ploy, he said in a special ceramah entitled "The Administration of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad (1981-1999): Internal and External Challenges", here today.

"Whatever the reasons, Umno must emphasise on its policies as well as the information technology and economy to social development in the rural areas," said Abdullah.

He said Umno must redirect its cause and struggles to the original objective of being the umbrella for all Malays-Bumiputeras and also to lead and protect all races.

Umno must seriously return to the times when Dr Mahathir first formed his government in 1981 which was based on the theme "clean, efficient and trustworthy".

"If we are sincere and believe in the criticisms against ourselves, Umno and the leadership must immediately attempt to regain the confidence of the voters including party members with regard to several individuals in the top party leadership.

"I see little criticisms against Umno as a party but rather against certain individuals and personalities," he said.

Abdullah said Umno and Dr Mahathir were strong but both were facing several challenges which must be overcome, and at the very least, corrected immediately before the coming general election.

"Umno and Dr Mahathir must win and will win as both have strong capacity, and Umno is a pragmatic and flexible party and it knows what needs to be done to survive and remain in power," he said.

He also said the Malays and non-Malays would continue to support Umno although on the surface the opposition parties appeared to be "busy".

"If Umno loses the power, the Malays will lose power forever, the history of the Malays in Singapore will be repeated in the peninsular mainland.

"Dr Mahathir's duty and Umno's greatest responsibility is to kill the opposition parties' dream and to raise the hopes of Umno and the other component parties in Barisan Nasional," he said.

Abdullah said Pas and Keadilan would only become the tools of the DAP.

-- BERNAMA

ARA MAI AO