

No changes needed for Umno posts, says Dr M

SUN 18.7.2000

By LESTER MELANYI

KUCHING, Mon: The present Umno set-up, in terms of number of top posts, is the best and need not be changed, said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We don't need to increase or reduce (the number of posts)," he said, adding that the existence of various posts need not necessarily be the cause of in-fighting or money politics.

"It all boils down to our culture and one's principles in life," Mahathir said when

'Positions not necessarily cause of money politics'

asked to comment on former deputy president Tun Ghafar Baba's proposal that the No. 2 post be abolished to curb money politics.

Umno Wanita chief Datuk Seri **Rafidah** Aziz had suggested that the three vice-presidents' posts be scrapped and that the deputy's post be open to all supreme council members.

Speaking at Kuching airport at the end of his three-day visit to Sarawak, the Prime Minister also said: "Some members even openly said that it is all right to accept a little money because they don't have much."

On Ghafar and **Rafidah's** suggestions, he said: "That's their view, which we will study. But even if we were to

change the set-up, it would not be too drastic. At the moment, there is no necessity"

He added that in-fighting in a political party could be reduced if the members and leaders hold firmly to the democratic principles.

"If we lose (in the party election), we should accept the decision of the majority. We don't just pull out from the party because we lost. If this is the case, Umno will not have any more members."

On PAS's claims that the arms heist in Grik was a "shadow play" by Umno, Ma-

hathir said if that was true, then the Al Ma'unah leader Mohamad **Amin** Mohamad Razali has "made a big sacrifice" for Umno.

"If it is a **sandiwara**, then I am very proud that **Amin**, who is against Umno, is willing to do such a thing, get himself arrested and be punished by the court."

Mahathir, who yesterday visited the family of the commando tortured and killed by the arms robbers in Sauk, Perak, promised that stern action would be taken against those responsible.