

11 JAN 2000

Mahathir-Umno

STICK TO ORIGINAL STRUGGLE OF PARTY, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that all Umno leaders and members should return to the party's original struggle without attaching importance to individuals.

The Prime Minister said the important thing now was to ensure the party remained united.

"I told them it is not important who becomes the leader but what is important is that Umno remains intact, united and will accept whoever is chosen as the leader...no personal loyalty," said Dr Mahathir who is Umno president.

He said there were now many Umno leaders and members who joined Umno after it had succeeded in developing the country.

"They can see clearly that the country has progressed and that the position of the Malays is assured, and they believe the Malays will remain the dominant race in Malaysia forever," he told reporters after giving a talk on leadership to 100 Umno leaders from throughout the country here.

Dr Mahathir said the dedication of Umno members towards the party's struggle for the race, religion and country had become "secondary" to their struggle to get positions for themselves and the people they like.

"So loyalty is no longer to the party but to individuals, and this hurts the party and we should return to Umno's core struggle," he said.

Dr Mahathir said in his meeting and leadership session with the leaders he explained Umno's original struggle as enshrined in the party constitution, that is fighting for the race, religion and nation.

He said the party was not struggling for any individuals, including himself.

"I am only given the trust to be president and it is not I (as an individual) that is important and need personal support," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno leaders should forget their positions in the party and instead give priority to the party's struggle for the race, religion and country.

"The party's success is more important than the success of any individual," he said.

Asked why such a session was organised now, Dr Mahathir said many Umno members did not understand the true struggle of Umno because the party was formed 54 years ago.

He said the leadership session was the first of its kind and the participants were the first group of trainers which would conduct similar sessions for other members so that they could return to the party's original struggle.

Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that the true spirit of Umno's struggle could be restored.

He said it was a good session as most of those who attended were from the younger generation members who did not know the true struggle of Umno.

Dr Mahathir said similar meetings and sessions would be held from time to time. -- BERNAMA

HS YBY