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DKL

Diplomacy, Politics and Realism in Umno

The Party Leader's New Task

THE decision by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to concentrate more on being president of Umno than on Prime Minister is timely.

When the politics of hate first appeared, many disbelieved it. Yet, it now has become a serious and threatening matter, splitting the Malay community.

Dr Mahathir himself is now at the steering wheel to try to drive Umno through the Pas line. To overcome the challenges will be an arduous, though not insurmountable, task.

To understand what's going through Dr Mahathir's mind, you need a brief course in Umno history and his political philosophy.

Dr Mahathir and Umno had everything their way up to now. The diarist will be horrified if he did not create a renaissance, removing Umno's baggage and seriously enticing young Bumiputeras. Club status for young Bumiputera women is an insult and quite unacceptable. Surely they deserve more than that - no less than the same status as Pemuda.

Umno has delivered, but not enough. It has to be more transparent, cultivating the image of a reformist party, though not in the sense of KeAdilan, of course, which just wants to topple Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir's task now is to lead and show Umno members the way in mastering the art of politics and diplomacy, and the balancing of political realism based on the way Umno wants Malaysia to be, as opposed to the way it really is and the way Pas wants to craft it.