

Obey

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and

be loyal

Umno members should abide by president's directives, says Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR: Umno members must be loyal to the party president and obey him, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told delegates at the end of the three-day Umno general assembly.

"Pardon me for my ego, because I don't want praises for Dr Mahathir.

"What I want is for you to listen to the president and abide by his directives," he said.

Dr Mahathir said when delegates referred to "the beloved president" in their speeches, he took it that they meant their love for the presidency and not the person holding the post.

Dr M: Lack of loyalty cause of downfall in two states

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kind of leader who could command loyalty from members.

"So, I want Umno members to make a pledge that from now on, they will be loyal to the president and follow what he says.

"If he chooses a candidate for the general election, then everyone must support the candidate.

"If we can do this, there is no question that we can have a clean sweep in 2004," he said, referring to the next general election expected to be held in that year.

Relating his 10-year tenure as Kelantan Umno liaison chief, Dr Mahathir said the lack of loyalty among members was the cause of Umno's downfall in that state and Terengganu, both now ruled by PAS.

He said whenever he chose a candidate, there were bound to be people who opposed his choice, and they went to the extent of sabotaging the candidate.

"That is why we lost. Not because PAS is strong. Look at PAS, they can

field dead wood and brainless candidates, yet they can win because their supporters are true to the party.

"But in Umno, not only will some people try to sabotage candidates whom they don't like, they are even willing to work with the opposition to ensure that the candidate (chosen by the Umno president) loses," he said.

He said Umno members should not question his choice of election candidates even if they were from another Barisan Nasional component party.

Dr Mahathir said it was time that

"If that is so, then all will be safe," he said in his winding-up speech.

However, he added, it was not enough just to love the president.

He said they also had to abide by his decisions, including his selection of candidates for positions and elections.

"To make sure that we win, don't just love the president, but obey his directives too," the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir said he had always insisted that Umno chose a president who is credible and clean, the

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members realised that the president had no personal agenda other than ensuring the success of the party.

"We cannot win with votes from 2.9 million members. We also need other people's support.

"That's why we must prove to them that we are a clean party, that we move solely to uphold religion, race and country."



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