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Umno-Reaction (Windingup)

UMNO MEMBERS BEAR HEAVIER TASK AFTER GENERAL ASSEMBLY

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- Umno leaders and members alike take leave from the party's 55th General Assembly which ended today bearing with them a task ever heavier than before as assigned to them in the Prime Minister and party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's winding up speech.

Party vice president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said Umno leaders and members would have to undertake effectively the mission that Dr Mahathir desired them to accomplish.

"Umno members have to close ranks, consolidate, set aside their quarrels and preoccupy themselves with correcting the wrong perceptions and countering PAS' deception of the Malays and Muslims," said Muhyiddin.

Merely accepting Dr Mahathir's message was not enough as his assignments for them must be translated into action with firmness and earnestly, he said.

Muhyiddin described Dr Mahathir's winding-up speech as one that should inspire Umno members "to move mountains and as that prompted by a genuine desire to see them act firmly and spiritedly."

As for Dr Mahathir's warning to parties not to drag him into the controversial acquisition of Nanyang Press Holdings Berhad by the MCA, Muhyiddin said the prime minister's explanation on the issue cleared misconceptions some quarters had before.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Datuk Abdul Hamid Zainal Abidin said Dr Mahathir's winding-up speech had pricked the conscience of the Malays about being a confident race with high civilisation.

Terengganu Umno deputy liaison chief Datuk Idris Jusoh said being loyal to the party president, mindful of the Malay struggle and not acting hastily should invigorate Umno members with the willpower and strength to regain control of PAS-run Kelantan and Terengganu in the 2004 general election.

Meanwhile, Puteri Umno Protem Chief Azalina Othman Said promised that Umno would see a new generation of Malays constantly mindful of the party's cause.

"Some of my girls cried when the president recited the poem. To see them cry while listening to the president for me is the biggest gift I can get. It shows that they understand what he said and they sympathise and I'm sure they would never forget that.

She said that from now on Umno would have a new generation of members, a united Wanita and Puteri which would unity first and that "we will never forget our cause and will help Umno take back Kelantan and Terengganu in 2004," she added.

-- BERNAMA

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