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Umno-Reaction (Veterans)

MALAYS HAVE CHANGED ALBEIT SLOWLY

KUALA LUMPUR, June 20 (Bernama) -- The Malays must constantly be reminded to change their attitude towards attaining excellence so that they do not become complacent," Umno veteran Tan Sri Aziz Tapa said today.

He said they would change quickly when faced with pressure and difficult situations.

"The Malays have changed but the change is a bit slow. It's like the swaying of the coconut frond because sometimes the environment influencew our change besides knowledge," he told reporters when asked to comment on Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's opening speech at the Umno general assembly here.

Dr Mahathir, in his speech, had reminded the Malays that political power would not guarantee their security if they continued to be weak and poor.

Aziz said the speech was aimed at reminding the Malays and bumiputeras of the struggle of the race and the problems they faced.

He said the wake up call was necessary, just like in the French saying that if a door was not opened at one knock, one had to knock repeatedly until it was opened.

"If a prayer is not answered, we must pray repeatedly morning, day and night and even shed tears to get it answered," he said.

Former deputy prime minister Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba said Dr Mahathir's speech carried a deep message to make the Malays aware of the need to change their attitude.

"Dr Mahathir's speech is very good...the Malays are unaware and they must be made to be aware," he said.

He said that although the prime minister made speeches containing similar calls each year it was sad to note that the Malays still did not want to change as hoped.

Umno Disciplinary Board chairman Tan Sri Tengku Ahmad Rithaudeen said Dr Mahathir was clearly disappointed with the attitude of the Malays who did not want to accept the call to practise noble values.

"He's dissatisfied because the Malays don't want to become a race whose capability can be enhanced speedily compared with the other races," he said.

He said Dr Mahathir also wanted to raise the spirit of the Malays to work harder and compete with evcryone.

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