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Mahathir-Spirit

MAHATHIR SAYS HE WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE UMNO AFTER RETIREMENT

JOHOR BAHRU, July 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reiterated today that he will not cut himself from Umno after he gives up his government and party posts in 15 months' time.

"I hope that when I no longer hold the prime minister's post, and am no longer the Umno president, there will be more time for me to meet Umno members at the grass-root level," he said.

Closing the Johor Barisan Nasional Convention, Dr Mahathir he would use the free time he would have to try to rekindle "the spirit that brought success to our nation".

He said he was referring to the spirit that began with the establishment of Umno when party members set aside their parochial sentiments in opposing the Malayan Union.

This is notwithstanding the fact that at that time the Malays did not consider themselves as such but as citizens of their respective states, he said.

Dr Mahathir said this spirit, which united the entire Malay population, was not there before Umno's establishment.

After the community united under the leadership of Datuk Onn Jaafar, there was a major shift in their mindset and they started regarding themselves as Malays, he said.

"So much so that the British had to respect the views of the Malays, who were united under the leadership of Datuk Onn Jaafar (and) succeeded in destroying Malayan Union," he said.

The prime minister said it was the Malay spirit developed through Umno, the United Malays National Organisation, that he would try to rekindle.

"Umno's contribution to the Malays then was indeed big, and there's no comparison to that in the history of the Malays," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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