

20 JUN 2003

UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY - SNIPPETS

KUALA LUMPUR, June 20 (Bernama) -- Snippets on the second day of the 54th Umno General Assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre today:

It has become a tradition at the Umno general assembly that ministers and senior party leaders drop by at the media centre at Bilik Pangkor, Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) in appreciation for the journalists' contribution covering the proceedings from morning till evening.

The assembly this time around is no exception when several ministers were seen to have visited the media centre and shook hands with every journalist they met today.

Among the VIPs were Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also Umno vice-president, Second Finance Minister Datuk Jamaludin Jarjis and Rural Development Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid.

The Malaysian National News Agency's (Bernama) operations centre, located beside the dining hall for media personnel, did not escape the attention of the VIPs.

At the Bernama operations centre, Muhyiddin, Jamaludin and Azmi were greeted by Bernama General Manager Datuk Syed Jamil Jaafar and Director of the Communications Team, National Economic Action Council (NEAC), Abdul Rahman Sulaiman, who was also former Bernama Editor-in-Chief, who happened to be at there.

Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, who is also Umno secretary-general, was the first visitor for the media centre on Wednesday.

Overseas Umno clubs, whose members largely comprised Malaysian students, continued to get the attention of senior party leaders as had been the case in previous Umno general assemblies.

The Umno general assembly is the best opportunity for the leaders to exchange views and to convey their message and advice to the Umno clubs representing Malaysian students and citizens all over the world.

The overseas Umno clubs get the attention of the senior party leaders because they form the secondliners who will inherit the leadership of the party and country.

Among those who had met and held dialogues with representatives of the overseas Umno clubs at the current assembly were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also party president, his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, who is also Wanita Umno head, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, who is also Umno Youth head.

As in previous years, food is never a problem at the Umno general assembly. Every morning, noon and evening, free food is provided for the delegates and those on duty, including the media representatives.

Last night, dinner was provided by party president Datuk Seri Dr

Mahathir Mohamad, while tonight's dinner was footed by his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The efficiency of the Umno headquarters in arranging for food for the thousands of delegates and personnel received praise from everyone.

In addition to the dinners given by the president and his deputy, the chairmen of the respective state Umno liaison bodies too provided food for their delegates.

After a sumptuous meal, the delegates were certainly full of ears for the debates by speakers on resolutions touching on the economy, education and religion as well as developmental issues concerning the Malays and preparations for the next general election.

Although the delegates were generally sad as the assembly would be the last for Dr Mahathir as party president, and many were in tears when the president delivered his policy speech which was regarded as a "farewell speech" yesterday, the mood at the dining hall was still cheerful as in previous years.

-- BERNAMA

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