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Give Umno newcomers chance to serve party, says Dr M

JITRA, Thurs. - Umno members should give newcomers the opportunity to serve the party as this will ensure the party's continued survival, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said last night.

He reminded the members that Umno was not an exclusive club, but a party which belonged to all Malays.

Thus, he said, those who were not given any posts in the party or in the Government, should accept the new leaders instead of resorting to actions which could affect the party's future.

"Umno will remain strong if we accept newcomers into the fold. Don't think that other people cannot join and that new members should be sidelined," he said at a thanksgiving dinner for Barisan Nasional winning the Kubang Pasu constituency in the general election.

Also present were Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, Umno Kubang Pasu division chief Tan Sri Osman Aroff, Kubang Pasu Member of Parliament Datuk Mohd Johari Baharom, Jitra State Assemblyman Prof Datuk Dr Othman Ishak and Bukit Kayu Hitam State Assemblywoman Khalidah Adibah Ayoub.

Dr Mahathir said no member had the right to wreck the party's future just because he was disappointed at not being given the post of division chief, made a candidate in the election or made a Minister.

"Members have the right to be disappointed, but they cannot betray Umno because the party belongs to all Malays. Our struggle is not over yet."

He thanked the people for supporting him during his 30-year tenure as their MP.

"I stepped down to give way to newcomers and I have not disturbed anyone after my retirement," he said.

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