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General assembly gets extensive coverage in Chinese Press

Balan Moses; Ramlan Said; Lim Chee Wei

CHINESE newspapers gave extensive coverage to the 54th Umno general assembly, dedicating up to eight pages daily to the event.

Sin Chew Daily and Nanyang Siang Pau, the main players in the field, also ran numerous commentaries, editorials and news analyses of the event.

Among core issues studied were the leadership transition in the party and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's attack on Pas.

Sin Chew, in its editorial on Wednesday, reckoned that there was a growing demand among delegates for more young, and new faces, in Umno.

The newspaper felt that Umno needed to accommodate the younger generation with the rapid development inside and outside the party that had reshaped the political landscape.

This, it opined, would be among challenges facing Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi when he takes over the helm in October from Dr Mahathir.

Nanyang Siang Pau, meanwhile, took an indepth look at Dr Mahathir's keynote address on Thursday with a commentary on Friday which paid tribute to his success in improving the welfare and economic status of Malaysians.

Acknowledging Dr Mahathir's role in championing the change of mindset among the Malays, the writer went on to say that one of the Prime Minister's legacies was unity in the Barisan Nasional.

Acquiring such mastery in party and leadership management will be one of the major challenges awaiting Pak Lah, it added.

The use of pantun at the assembly was also closely followed by the Chinese Press which translated several into Mandarin including New Straits Times group editor Datuk Ahmad A. Talib's tribute to Dr Mahathir entitled Tiada Kau Berdosa.

The Chinese dailies also looked at the call by Tanjong Umno Youth chief, Raja Munir Shah Raja Mustafa, for Umno to be allowed to take over the Chief Minister's post in Penang.

Sin Chew yesterday raised the question of whether Raja Munir's suggestion could lead to the introduction of a rotation system similar to that implemented in Sabah.