

18/04/2003

Muhyiddin: Don't assume Umno can win

PETALING JAYA, Thurs. - Umno leaders and members should not take things for granted now that the party is regaining the support it lost in the 1999 general election, party vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

He said although the situation had improved, there were always new issues to be addressed to avoid exploitation by the Opposition.

"We should not take things for granted and assume that we will do well in the next general election as this attitude will not help strengthen the support for our party.

"The mentality of the electorate is different now as they are well-informed and are more independent," he said.

Muhyiddin, who is the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister, said this after officiating at a seminar titled Pemikiran Dr Mahathir (The Thinking of Dr Mahathir) organised by the Batu Puteri Umno division.

He said the young generation was not bound by the past election results and many of them did not even know who the present leaders were or what were the leaders' contribution to the party and the country.

"We must pay more attention to these young voters as they are an informed group who are exposed to many things. We will be wrong if we assume that they will support us.

"As such more programmes must be organised to get close to them."

On roles played by Umno Youth and Puteri Umno, Muhyiddin said the two movements have been successful in getting the support of young people.

However, he said more needed to be done by the movements.

Earlier, Muhyiddin said it was unfortunate that the Malays were slow to progress and had become dependent on the Government for help and support.

"This is one aspect that the Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) had frequently raised in his speeches.

"He had also expressed his disappointment that the Malays have not developed much because they failed to change their mind-set.

"While the other races have moved forward, the Malays have not changed. We are not working hard enough and we are not ready to accept the challenges and to acquire more skills," he said.