

Mahathir: I'm being stopped from meeting old friends

ALOR STAR: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was stopped by certain quarters from meeting Umno members including his old friends in the party.

The former Umno president claimed that he also could not meet academics who wanted to interview him while the newspapers were not allowed to write what he said.

"I am a former Umno president but have become a pariah in Umno," he told newsmen here yesterday when asked on questions raised over his deci-

sion to contest the post of division delegate to the party general assembly in November.

He said that some Umno supreme council members said his decision was inappropriate for a former party president.

Asked what issues he would raise during the assembly, Dr Mahathir said he would find interesting issues to speak on.

"Even if I was chosen as a delegate, I might not be allowed to talk. If I get the chance maybe for five minutes, which is too short for me to say anything."

Umno election committee member Tan Sri Khalid Abdullah asked why so many Umno leaders were feeling threatened by Dr Mahathir.

"Tun is resorting to the only avenue, the general assembly, to address party members. He has been denied the opportunity to meet up with Umno members or speak to them in the past few months," he said. Dr Mahathir and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali are here for the wedding of his grandnephew Mohamad Nahiz Rahmat.