

Delegates want Dr M to end feud

THEY did not mention him by name or use harsh words. But there is little doubt that Umno delegates want Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to end his campaign to destabilise party president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Taking the cue from the president and his deputy that there be no personal attacks during the annual general assembly, several speakers refrained from launching into a tirade against the former prime minister.

Tawau Umno chief Datuk Tawriq Datuk Abu Bakar Titingan said the polemics should not go on.

"I make a plea to Tun Mahathir. Please don't prolong the polemics that is going on. Umno is like a tower with a strong foundation. It is not easily swayed by anything.

"However, I am worried if there is a rot from inside. Then the effect will be severe and the problem will continue for a long time," he said, adding Sabah Umno gave its full support to the president. "He just appears to be soft, actually he is very strict and a strong leader."

Kulim Bandar Baru Umno Youth chief Datuk Azimi Daim called on members to pray hard so that whatever crisis affecting the party could be resolved amicably.

Azimi also said members should be aware of enemies within the party, including "those who were popular then and still popular now" out to ruin the party.

Perak representative Datuk Hamdi Abu Bakar touched on the sensitive topic using a bit of old-fashioned Malay diplomacy. "We all pray that Tun will recuperate quickly so that he can watch the Malays progress well, just like he dreamed of during his 22-year reign. But the Malays are doing well, even under Pak Lah's leadership."

He said Abdullah's mere three years was small compared to the 22 years of Dr Mahathir's era. "But it is not nice for the whole world to see two Malay leaders debating against one another," he said.

Datuk Md Alwi Che Ahmad reminded delegates that no two persons could be the same or have the same style.

Merbok Umno chief Senator Tajul Urus Mohd Zaini said Kedah Umno would remain steadfast in its support of Abdullah.