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Don't repeat tragedy of 1988, Shabery urges Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR: The tragedy that saw Umno being declared illegal in 1988 under Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's leadership should not be allowed to happen again, said supreme council member Datuk Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

"I feel it would be appropriate for Dr Mahathir to exercise more caution when making statements because we don't want the demise of Umno, and the deregistration of Umno that occurred

during his leadership to be repeated.

"I fear that Umno will sink further after it first began to sink during Dr Mahathir's reign when it was deregistered," he told reporters after attending his first Information Ministry monthly assembly as the Information Minister at Wisma Radio in Angkasapuri yesterday.

He was commenting on Dr Mahathir's claims that members

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of the Umno supreme council were afraid to voice their opinions to the top leadership.

Ahmad Shabery said that during Dr Mahathir's leadership many rules were imposed, including a resolution passed at the party general assembly that the posts of president and deputy president must be uncontested.

"There was no contest after 1987 but now he is saying it is undemocratic. Maybe Dr

Mahathir has forgotten.

"The openness in Pak Lah's era should not be taken advantage of," he said.

Ahmad Shabery said Dr Mahathir had also reminded delegates to the Umno general assembly in 1997 that criticism about the party and its leadership could only be made through party channels, via branches, divisions and the supreme council and not outside the party. — Bernama