

THE STAR

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Dr M: Umno leadership must change now

KAJANG: The leadership transition in Umno must be done now to ensure that the party is on a solid footing to lead the Barisan Nasional in recapturing states lost to the Opposition in the next general election, says former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said this was because reviving the party would take time and general elections must be held no later than every five years.

"Five years is not a long time. If we

don't do it (the leadership transition) now, it might be too late, more so if the Opposition is able to govern the states (Kedah, Penang, Perak, Selangor) well," he told reporters after giving a speech at a Malay leadership forum here today.

He was commenting on remarks by Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin yesterday that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi would be holding discussions with Deputy Prime

Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak about the latter taking over the mantle of leadership.

Dr Mahathir said if that was true it was something good as leadership transitions should be done smoothly.

"Most of the Umno members want this, he (Abdullah) must respond and do it in a good way. If not, there will be calls for extraordinary general meetings to have amendments made to the party constitution, followed by

a motion of no confidence ... all this will be bad for the image of Umno," said Dr Mahathir.

He also said that he had nothing to do with it (the power transition).

"Nothing to do with me, I am not involved in this. He has to do the needful for the party. It is obvious that instead of blaming me or blaming everybody else, he must accept responsibility because it happened during his tenure of office," he said.

— Bernama

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