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## Dr M: Fresh MCA polls not a wise move

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By YUEN MEIKENG

meikeng@thestar.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** It would not be wise for the MCA to have fresh elections to determine the party's new president because the results would still end up in a split, says former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said a neutral person who was accepted by all quarters could take up the leadership because it was important for the party to be whole and complete again.

Dr Mahathir added that should the person be inexperienced, he or she could be aided by party advisers who were wiser.

"However, this is just my personal opinion.

"The party delegates can go ahead with the extraordinary general meeting (EGM) and

make their own decision," Dr Mahathir told reporters after launching Angkasawan Dr Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor's medical clinic at the Starhill Gallery here on Friday.

Asked whether there was hope for the party to become stronger, Dr Mahathir said:

"Yes, it can be strengthened.

"There is nothing wrong with the party."

He added that even if any party's leadership faced opposition from a small group, the effects would still be great on the party's unity and image.

On the amendments to the Umno constitution passed during the party's recent annual general assembly, Dr Mahathir was skeptical that the changes would be able to rid the party from corruption.

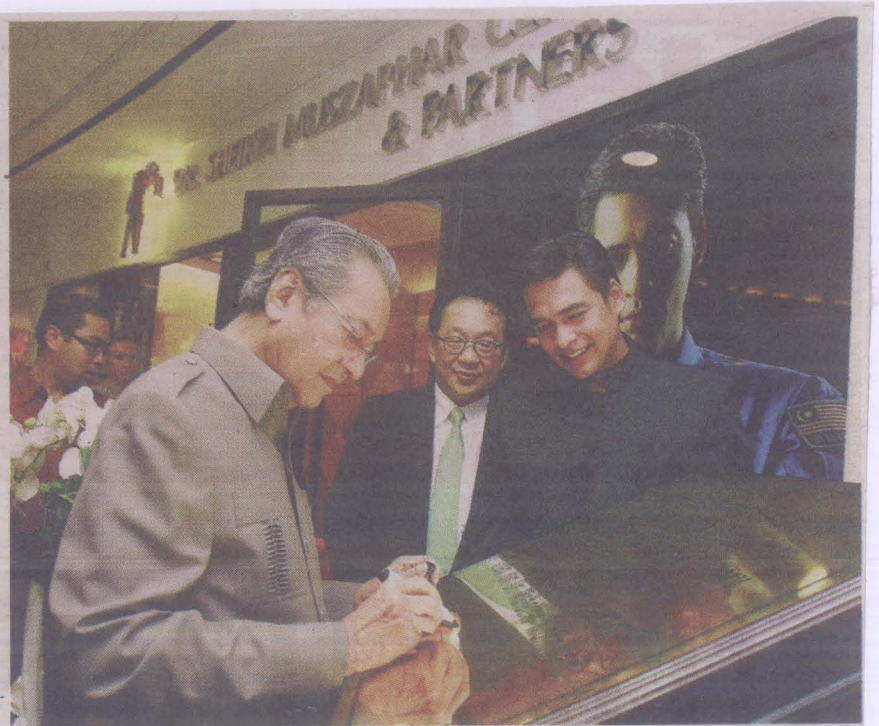
"This is the third time the constitution has been amended.

"After the second time, corruption was still prevalent so I don't think this round would be different," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that even though more Umno members would be able to vote for the party leadership after the amendments, this did not mean that money would not be offered to buy votes.

During the event earlier, Dr Mahathir launched Dr Sheikh Muszaphar's clinic which offered free treatment for orphans from three welfare homes -- the Ti-Ratana Welfare Society, Fardhu Kifayah orphanage and the Syifa orphanage.

Dr Sheikh Muszaphar, who is also a surgeon, said the free treatment was his way of giving back to the society after having achieved his dream of being an astronaut and for the support from the Malaysian public.



**Doctors:** Dr Mahathir launching the medical clinic at Starhill Gallery in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Looking on are YTL Corp Bhd managing director Tan Sri Francis Yeoh and Dr Sheikh Muszaphar (right).