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Dr M: Too many parties will split nation

JOHOR BARU: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad agrees that the number of political parties should be capped.

He said an overly large number of political parties would cause recruitment problems and would make it impossible to form a government.

"If there are too many (parties), the people would be split and none of the parties has a mandate to form a government.

"There are some countries with two parties only, and either one would be able to form a government. But even with two parties, there are problems," he said when commenting on a recommendation from the Registrar of Societies that the 33 political parties in existence were sufficient.

He said this after launching the "Seminar perpaduan ummah" (Muslim community unity seminar) at Kompleks Mawar here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said he agreed with registrar Datuk Abdul Rahman Othman, who indicated that freezing new applications for political parties would give the country much needed respite from politicking since the March 2008 polls.

On another matter, Dr Mahathir urged Muslims to change their mindset to develop themselves and bring success to their countries.

"They must try to change their mindset and value system. Until they change, they will not succeed.

He said some Malaysian Muslims "wanted to become instant millionaires", as they were given many opportunities such as licences, Approved Permits and contracts only to sell them off to others.

He said a mindset change was crucial as many Muslims were now less successful in many fields, as compared with non-Muslims.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir touched on the integrity of Muslims on the international front, which has been on the decline.