

Capitalise On Core Strengths, Umno Members Urged
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 2 (Bernama) -- The five core strengths cited by Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak should be embraced by members as they could beef up the party's resolve in confronting the opposition and staying relevant.

Kedah Umno liaison committee deputy chairman Datuk Mukhriz Tun Mahathir said if Umno members capitalise on the core strengths wisely, the party could relive its past glory.

He said the support from teachers, who used to dominate the party, was waning as entrepreneurs and business people took the centre stage.

"Even my father (Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad) had expressed his worry that Umno, which used to be a party made up of teachers, would be turned into a businessmen party, when he opened the general assembly in 1996," said Mukhriz when commenting on Umno's core strengths.

The core strengths are the ability to relook at the party to benefit from the new environment; to uphold the principle of moderation, to be in the forefront in the supremacy of ideas; to place the welfare of the people above everything else; and the ability to deliver promises.

Mukhriz said a large membership would not guarantee Umno's victory in the next general election if members failed to appreciate the party's basic struggle to improve the well-being of the people.

He said the Umno president raised the five core strengths as 'warning bells' as the party geared up for the next general election.

Universiti Sains Malaysia's School of Social Sciences lecturer Dr Sivamurugan Pandian attributed Umno's debacle in the 2008 general election to the erosion of the core strengths.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said although the core strengths were not debated by delegates in detail, it did not mean that they were being ignored.

"The issues raised by the president were well-received by Umno members. The members understood them.

"There was no necessity to analyse the core strengths as they were clearly presented. What is important now is to translate them at the grassroots level," he said.

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