

**Open The Door To Professionals, Intellectuals To Join Umno, Urges Mahathir
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MELAKA, March 28 (Bernama) -- Umno divisional and branch leaders should open wide the door for professionals and intellectuals to join the party and then field them as candidates for the general election.

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he felt that Umno was facing a dearth of capable leaders as the leadership at the divisional and branch levels were hampering their entry into the party.

"For decades Umno has 'not allowed' the smart ones to join the party. That is why many doctors have joined Pas.

"This ultimately makes it difficult for Umno to find suitable candidates in ensuring victory in the elections," he said after delivering his keynote address at the Global Culture Symposium organised by Sekolah Menengah Sains Muzaffar Shah at Puteri Resort, here, Wednesday.

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