

**Umno Members Must Return To Original Struggle To Win General Election - Tun M  
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JITRA, Oct 2 (Bernama) -- Umno members must return to the party's original struggle for the sake of religion, race and country by casting aside self-interest to win the general election.

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that is is the only way to cure the 'chopping' or 'backstabbing' disease within the party.

"Previously, Umno members sacrifice anything including willing to pawn jewellery to help the party but now their posts are for landing contracts and to become candidates.

"If the general election is held now, Umno may lose big because the support and spirit has faded," Dr Mahathir told reporters after presenting a talk, 'Bicara Negarawan,' at the premier gathering of Federal Village Development and Security Committee (JKKKP) members here today.

Some 2,000 JKKKP chairman and secretary from the state attended the one hour talk. Also present are Kedah Umno liaison chairman Datuk Paduka Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah and his deputy Datuk Mukhriz Tun Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir however said Barisan Nasional (BN) could win big at the general election if Umno's disease could be cured.

Asked whether the time is right for general election, he said: "It is unsuitable as lot of things need to be done and Umno is not strong enough. "

"Umno still has factions and the split is still critical. If there is awareness, a sense of gratitude and unity, BN can win.

"Umno should dispose of dissatisfaction. Although they may not get what they want, they still benefit in other forms."

On PAS' plan to implement hudud law, Dr Mahathir said they had to resort to this as "they feel that they will lose."

"The country consists of a multi-religious population. If 100 percent are Muslims there is no problem.

"Nik Aziz wants to implement hudud only for Muslims and this is not fair. Islam demands justice in all matters."

Asked by a Chinese newspaper reporter whether the government will allow Chin Peng who is reported ill to return, Dr Mahathir said the people are still angry with the communists.

"Chin Peng chose to betray the country. We have to consider the feelings of so many victims of communists who lost family members and limbs.

"Many people still can't forgive him. We have to think of their feelings and not that of Chin Peng."

He added Chin Peng fought the government to install communism and not for independence as fought by Datuk Onn Jaafar, Tun Sambantan and others.

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