

Shahrir says Dr M's loss signals the end of an era

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JOHOR BARU: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's failure to be elected as a delegate to attend the Umno general assembly signals the end of a political era, Johor Baru MP Datuk Shahrir Samad said.

He said Dr Mahathir's loss reflected the dwindling support for the former prime minister.

"Although he became Prime Minister in 1981, Dr Mahathir's era started in 1987 when he defeated Tun Musa Hitam and Tan Sri Razaleigh (Hamzah) for the top post.

"That signalled his prominence and the end of Tun Abdul Razak's political legacy and philosophy," he said after the Johor Baru Umno division meeting here yesterday.

Shahrir, who is division chief, supported Dr Mahathir's right to voice his concerns but they should be done in a closed-door meeting.

Umno supreme council member Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz said Dr Mahathir's loss sent the clear message that no individual was more important than Umno.

On a claim by Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir that division, state and federal machineries were used against his father, Nazri said: "He is only belittling the capabilities of delegates in making a good decision. They know what they are doing." Nazri is Padang Rengas Umno chief and also Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said it was time for people to focus on the implementation of the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid said Kubang Pasu did not elect Dr Mahathir because they did not have the heart to see him attending the general assembly as a division delegate.

Supreme council member Datuk Azalina Othman Said said Umno members should beware of certain people who have used Dr Mahathir to cause a split in the party.

PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang attributed Dr Mahathir's failure in his bid to become delegate to a lack of democracy in the party.