

R CE 29-08 00225 EA529

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Mahathir-court

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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 29 (Bernama) -- The Kelantan State Legislative Assembly should respect the court decision that former assemblymen Haji Nordin Salleh and Haji Wan Mohd Najib Wan Mohamad were not members of Parti Semangat 46, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said Umno was seeking a court declaration to nullify the assembly's expulsion of Haji Nordin (Sungai Pinang seat) and Haji Wan Najib (Limbongan) only to ensure that the assembly respected the court decision.

+We are convinced that our members were never members of Semangat 46. Therefore, they cannot be expelled by the assembly,+ he told a news conference after chairing a meeting of the Umno Supreme Council at the party headquarters here.

Haji Nordin and Haji Wan Najib were expelled by the state legislative assembly under an amendment to the state Constitution which bars party-hopping.

Elected to the respective seats on Semangat 46 tickets in the general election last October, they were deemed to have switched parties when they joined Umno.

Last week, the Kuala Lumpur High Court declared that they had never been members of Semangat 46.

In another suit pending in the High Court, the former assemblymen are seeking a declaration that their expulsion was null and void. -- more

♥29/08/21-08MST

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said Umno itself had respected and abided by the court decision which declared the party unlawful although +the world had accepted Umno as being valid.+

In the same way, there was evidence to show that the membership of Haji Nordin and Haji Wan Najib in Semangat 46 was invalid and therefore, he said, Umno felt that the court decision should be respected.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also said that Umno had identified the reasons for its defeat in Saturday's by-elections in Sungai Pinang and Limbongan.

It was confident that a more determined effort would bring victory in future elections, he added.

He said Umno was satisfied with the outcome of the by-elections which were won by Semangat 46 candidates but with reduced majorities. Haji Nordin and Haji Wan Najib, who recontested the seats as Barisan Nasional candidates, were defeated.

The Prime Minister also said that today's meeting of the Supreme Council decided that the third Bumiputera Congress be held in December, and that the matter be submitted to the government for implementation.

He said the congress was necessary because the formulation of the national development policy gave emphasis to varying aspects and in the implementation of the national economic policy greater emphasis would be given to the quality rather than the quantity of Bumiputera participation.

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Mahathir-court 3 Kuala Lumpur

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said today's meeting also agreed that Umno's constitution be amended to enable three more appointments to the Supreme Council and also to provide for elections for the posts of head of Umno Wanita and Umno Youth.

The constitution now allows for the appointment of seven members to the Supreme Council.

The meeting also agreed that an amendment be made to enable people whose application to join Umno had been rejected at branch level to appeal to the Supreme Council.

These amendments would be brought up for discussion and approval at the party's general assembly on Nov 9, he said.

He also said that the Supreme Council allowed the suspended Pasir Mas Division Wanita and Youth wings, the Kuala Krai Youth wing and the Seputeh Wanita wing to hold their general meetings. -- more

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Supreme Council also accepted the application from the Member of Parliament for Machang Ahmad Shukri Haji Hassan, former Kelantan Parti Semangat 46 Secretary Kassim Mohamed and 2,767 former Semangat members from Pasir Mas to join Umno.

At the meeting, the Deputy Chairman of the Sabah Umno Liaison Committee Tun Datu Haji Mustapha bin Datu Harun took his oath as an Umno Supreme Council member. -- Bernama

♥29/08/21-46MST