

Umno to seek legal advice on court rulings

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ALOR STAR, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Umno would seek legal advice on the interpretation of the law with regard to decisions made by the courts concerning internal party matters.

"In my opinion, courts do not have the power (to decide on party matters) ... we have made this stand a long time ago," said the Umno president and

Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir was asked for his views on the actions of certain Umno members who had taken party matters to courts, causing delays in holding divisional delegates' meetings.

Earlier, he chaired a meeting with the Kubang Pasu Umno divisional committee members at the Menteri Besar's official residence at Mentaloon here.

Dr Mahathir said the Umno constitution was clear that anyone who took party matters to court would be expelled unless he was given the right to ask

the court to enforce party decisions.

Dr Mahathir said he believed that if courts had the power to decide on party matters then people would use them indiscriminately.

He said Umno would get the clarification on the powers of the courts and if the interpretations showed that the courts had such powers, the laws would be amended to prevent the interference.

"If not, time will be wasted in court. People will create problems. For example, a person may intentionally bring someone with him to attend a meeting even

though the person has no right to be present.

"But, when he does not win, he will claim that the meeting is invalid because of the presence of the ineligible person.

"If this is the case, we will spend most of our time in courts."

Dr Mahathir said sometimes the courts made decisions at short notice.

"When we want to hold the meeting on the next day, a lawyer will come a day before to tell us that we have been restrained from holding the meeting.

"Sometimes when we are about to start a meeting, a lawyer arrives to show us a court injunction, resulting in the meeting being delayed. Some are doing it intentionally," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he feared that a similar problem would occur at the Umno general assembly in November.

Asked about the implications of divisions failing to hold meetings by the end of the month because of court decisions, Dr Mahathir said the party regulations had to be referred to.