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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO DIVISIONS AND BRANCHES TO ASSUME PRO TEM STATUS ON JULY 1

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 16 (Bernama) -- All Umno division and branch committees will assume pro tem status on July 1 to bring them in line with changes brought about by the creation of 12 new parliamentary seats and redelineation of electoral boundaries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Umno Supreme Council today decided that the status should be changed because the addition of parliamentary seats and redrawing of electoral boundaries had changed the structure of the party at the lower level.

"The pro tem committees will continue to serve until December 1995 when the general election is due ... until then, or maybe earlier, we will not have elections in the new divisions (all divisions)," he told reporters after chairing an Umno Supreme Council meeting at the party headquarters.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno President, said the existing elected committee members at the branch level, including Youth and Wanita, would maintain their posts as pro tem office-bearers.

For the pro tem divisional committees, the State Liaison Committee Chairmen would make recommendations to the party's management committee, which would discuss the matter with the party president before forwarding it to the Supreme Council for a decision, he said. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the Supreme Council also decided to hold the party's annual general assembly in November but the dates had yet to be fixed.

The general assembly might be held from Nov 17 to 20, he said.

He said all divisions, including new ones, could hold elections to pick delegates to the assembly.

Members were given until May 31 this year to settle their annual subscription for 1993, he said.

Umno Secretary-General Datuk Mohamed Rahmat told reporters the status change would affect about 35,000 branches nationwide -- 15,000 Umno branches and 10,000 branches each for the Youth and Wanita movements. -- more

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He said the Supreme Council's decision was consistent with the provisions of clause 13 of the party's constitution which stipulates that pro tem divisional committees must be complete.

"The liaison chiefs must submit their recommendations by June 15," he said.

For divisional Youth and Wanita pro tem committees, he said the state liaison committees of the movements would make recommendations to the heads of the respective movements before the matter was taken through the same process at the divisional pro tem level.

"We do not know how long the committees will have pro tem status. The party will decide later when to have new elections at the branch and divisional levels," he said.

The Supreme Council will announce the composition of the divisional pro tem committees. -- more

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The process of readjustment for the new branches and divisions would also determine the rights to the assets at these levels, he said.

Asked why the pro tem status would take effect in July, he said Umno expected the new electoral boundaries to be made official in July.

Mohamed, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) Secretary-General, urged other BN components to bring their party structures in line with these changes. -- Bernama

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