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Sabbaruddin-S46

AUTOMATIC UMNO MEMBERSHIP ONLY FOR 10,000 EX-S46 MEMBERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 29 (Bernama) -- Only 10,000 out of 196,000 applications for Umno membership from former Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) members can be accepted automatically, new Umno Secretary-General Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said today.

He said of the rest, 120,000 applications were rejected because they wanted to join only new Umno branches which should be specially set up for ex-S46 members when they could join existing Umno branches in their areas.

Some 60,000 applications were rejected because they did not complete the forms properly or were under age or were already members, he told reporters at his new office in Umno Headquarters here.

Sabbaruddin, who succeeded Datuk Mohamed Rahmat as Secretary-General, said the Umno Supreme Council which met last night decided to reject the applications of those who wanted to join Umno branches specially meant for them as there was no such classification as "former S46 Umno members."

He said the 10,000 whose applications had been accepted would join existing Umno branches.

Asked to comment on news reports that he was not surprised over the announcement yesterday, Sabbaruddin said: "I was not surprised yesterday but before that I was indeed surprised."

That was when the party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad informed him verbally and by letter of the appointment.

Sabbaruddin said he would meet all Umno, Wanita Umno and Umno Youth divisional secretaries soon. -- BERNAMA

MS FAZ AAM