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Call to hold all Umno elections every four years

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KUALA TERENGGANU, Fri. - Terengganu Umno liaison committee chief Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad today proposed that the election for all posts in Umno be held once every four or five years.

He said at present the party members were involved in too many elections before the party's general election.

"Before the general election, we are involved in the branch-level election, next year in the divisional-level and the following year the general assembly election," he said, adding that the party members needed time for other matters as well.

"We need time to discuss and plan social service programmes for the people and to come up with feasible and productive strategies to defeat the the opposition parties," Wan Mokhtar said.

The Menteri Besar said this at the launching of a State-level seminar on the Umno Constitution at Dewan Konvesyen, Wisma Darul Iman.

He stressed that this matter should not be taken lightly and people should not be allowed to join the party merely for the sake of securing high positions in Umno and disregarding their social services.

Wan Mokhtar added that Umno members must always focus on providing service to the people.

"We are given the mandate to lead and form a Government and we must safeguard and respect the trust given to us," he said.

He said the proposal would be brought up for the Supreme Council's attention next year.

Later, Wan Mokhtar was asked to comment on the Supreme Council's decision to suspend two former Wanita Exco members.

Wan Mokhtar said he fully supported the Supreme Council's decision as it was time to take action against those involved in abuse of power, corruption and money politics.

He added the move was appropriate after several warnings and reminders by Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Umno members to project a clean image of the party.

"The objective to rid the party of negative images involving corruption and abuse of powers is timely," he said.

Yesterday, the Umno Supreme Council suspended the membership of former Wanita Umno treasurer Siti Zainab Abu Bakar and former secretary of the movement, Senator Habshah Osman, for wrongful transfer of the movement's funds amounting to RM1.8 million.

Acting party president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, in announcing the decision, said Siti Zainab was also relieved of her job as Deputy Primary Industries Minister with immediate effect. However, they remain as MP for Tebrau and Senator respectively.

The meeting also decided to suspend all party posts of Datuk Sahar Arpan, the Malacca State Assemblyman who is facing three corruption charges in the Malacca High Court.

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