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Umno-Clubs

DR MAHATHIR AGREES ON ESTABLISHMENT OF WORLD UMNO CLUB COUNCIL

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today agreed in principle to a proposal to set up a council of Umno clubs worldwide to coordinate programmes to prepare Malaysian students for the new millennium.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Umno president, expressed his agreement at a meeting with the leaders of 22 overseas Umno clubs who are attending the Umno general assembly at the Putra World trade centre here.

"The Umno clubs agreed that it was time to form a World Umno Club Council in the hope that we can enhance efforts to prepare all Umno members, especially Malaysian under-graduates for the new millennium," Long Kechik, president of the Pekan Baru Umno Club in Indonesia, said.

"We submitted the memorandum (on the establishment of the council) and asked for his (Dr Mahathir's) blessing and he gave his blessing in principle," he said on behalf of the other Umno clubs after the meeting.

He said the council members would comprise leaders of overseas Umno clubs while the Umno headquarters here was proposed as its secretariat.

The annual Umno general assembly would be used as a forum for them to coordinate their programmes, he said.

Long said the establishment of the council was needed because the overseas Umno clubs now acted on their own without any network among them and were often regarded as Umno's tools.

"No doubt we receive RM2,000 a year from the Umno headquarters for our activities but Umno has never set the conditions (for its own interest).

"These clubs are fora for us to bring our young generation (abroad) closer to the national leaders," he said.

Earlier, they met deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who explained various issues, especially the recent fall of the Ringgit and the share market, to them.

He said Anwar also reminded them that as students their duty was to study and they must strike a balance between knowledge and faith.

"On the whole, we understood Anwar's explanation and this will make it easier for us to explain to the other members what is happening in our country," he said.

Meanwhile, party vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, at a lunch he hosted for the Umno club representatives, told them that the Umno international bureau would be responsible for informing them of the party's activities in the country.

The representatives also met National Unity and Social Development Minister Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail who reminded them to work as a team and to divide their time wisely between their studies and politics. -- BERNAMA

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