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Sabbaruddin: Ex-S46 members can stand in polls

MALACCA, Sun. - Umno secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said former Parti Melayu Semangat 46 members who had joined Umno were free to contest any position in the party elections.

He said since they were considered Umno members, they had the right to vote or contest.

Sabbaruddin, who is also Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister, was speaking after attending a briefing with Malacca Umno branch leaders at the State Al Azim mosque auditorium this afternoon.

Also present were Umno permanent chairman Tan Sri Sulaiman Ninam Shah, supreme council members, Datuk Seri Mohd Zin Abdul Ghani and Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam, who are the State Umno liaison committee chief and deputy respectively.

Sabbaruddin was asked on the possibility of former S46 members who had joined Umno contesting for posts in the up-coming branch elections.

Some 10,603 former S46 members have been registered while the applications of about 121,000 others are being processed by the various divisions to identify which branch they should be admitted to.

The Umno Supreme Council has set April 1 to May 15 for the branch elections.

Sabbaruddin urged Umno members not to treat these former S46 members differently.

"This is something which party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad does not want to see. They are all considered as Umno members since joining the party last October."

On the briefing today, Sabbaruddin urged other State liaison committees to hold such sessions with federal-level party leaders to avoid problems in their branch elections.

He said such briefings could help branch leaders and the secretaries to know what was expected of them during the elections.

"The party leaders do not want to see any of branches suspended because of irregularities in the conduct of the annual general meeting."

He said if there were problems in branch elections, the State liaison committee secretary should step in to ensure the smooth running of the election.

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