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SACK FOR DIVISIONAL AND BRANCH HEADS WHO GO AGAINST PARTY DECISION

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Umno divisional and branch heads will be expelled if they are found to have rejected members reinstated and confirmed by the party's Supreme Council, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Dr Mahathir said the same applies to divisional and branch heads who refused to accept party subscription fees from members which barred them from participating in party activities.

"Their refusal to accept the reinstated members is against the party decision.

"If they think that their stand is more important than the party's wishes and want to go against the party's decision, they might be expelled if found to have acted in such a manner," he said at a news conference after chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting at the party headquarters here.

The stern warning by Dr Mahathir was made after he referred to the Supreme Council's decision on Umno administration especially the application to join the party by former members of the now defunct Parti Melayu Semangat 46.

Dr Mahathir said the Supreme Council had to decide on members' admission into the branch after the particular branch and division failed to resolve the problem which cropped up.

"When the party headquarters was referred to problems at branch or divisional level and it confirmed the validity of the person's membership, then the person must be admitted by the branch and division.

"Disciplinary action including expulsion will be taken against divisional or branch heads who refused to admit these members," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the party did not need members especially divisional and branch heads who can cause splits and weaken the party if they refused to accept the Supreme Council decision.

"Therefore if they are going against the party (for refusing to accept the Supreme Council's decision) and if they (divisional and branch heads) are not around also we might lose, then it is not a lost if they are not in the party," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno headquarters would conduct a detailed investigation if there were allegations that there were branches or divisions which refused to admit members reinstated by the Supreme Council.

He said the Supreme Council had decided that members who were charged in court would not be allowed to stand for party elections.

"If the case is being investigated, they can contest but those who have been charged in court will not be allowed to do so," he said without elaborating.

Earlier, the Supreme Council members presented a birthday cake to Dr Mahathir who turned 72 today.

They later sang the "Happy Birthday To You" and Dr Mahathir cut the cake with a keris followed by the recital of "doa selamat" by Minister in the Prime Ministers Department Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman. -- BERNAMA

AH ZUL RM