

03/03/1998

'Decision to disallow contests constitutional'

Rashid Yusof; Ramlan Said

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the party's earlier decision disallowing members from challenging supreme council members who are already divisional heads is in accordance with party constitution.

This also applies to cases involving supreme council members who are not divisional heads from taking on the incumbents.

The decision, which only applies to divisional heads, was reaffirmed by the council. Contests involving supreme council members bidding for other divisional posts are allowed.

Dr Mahathir said this at a Press conference after a supreme council meeting at party headquarters tonight.

He then read out provisions in the party constitution empowering the council to make such decisions. Hence, whether the decision was in accordance with the party's constitution or not, did not arise.

Dr Mahathir said the council did not discuss what action would be taken against those who did not comply, adding the party has its own ways of dealing with such matters. The supreme council also discussed the economic problems.

Given the economic problems, the council had decided to discourage contests.

Asked to comment on the cross-over of Tendong State Assemblyman Hussain Ahmad to Pas on Saturday, Dr Mahathir said the party needed members who were loyal and abiding.

The council has also placed six more divisions under its supervision, bringing the total to 27.

The additional divisions and the supreme councils members supervising them are Teluk Intan (Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman); Dungun (Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam); Segamat (Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob); Bandau in Sabah (Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib); Bakri in Johor (Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Samad); and Bandar Tun Razak in the Federal Territory (Datuk Abu Hassan Omar).

Party deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the council had also endorsed the recommendations of the management and disciplinary committee to expel and suspend members for various offences.

Seven members of the Nibong Tebal division in Penang have been expelled for working with the Opposition during the Sungai Bakap State by-election on last Nov 8, while two others had their memberships suspended.

Two members of the Jempol division in Negri Sembilan were also expelled for continuing to be involved in party matters while under suspension.

Three members were also suspended for fighting at branch meetings. Two are Mohamad Yusof and Rahman Ahmad from the Permatang Pasir branch under the Kota Melaka division and Mohd Said Mat from the Mak Mandin branch in Penang.

The council also endorsed the decision to bar Kubang Kerian division head Mat Zin Awang in Kelantan from contesting for any posts, for not accepting new members into the division.

(END)