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Mahathir-Election

ELECTION FOR POSTS WILL BE ON CONSULTATIVE BASIS

KOTA BAHARU, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- The Umno Supreme Council will try to ensure that the election for divisional posts in March 12 and 29 will be on consultative basis, says party's president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the supreme council would try to convince Umno members and the incumbents of the need to reach an agreement to avoid contest in the interest of the party.

"We give priority to party's interest. We subscribe to democracy but not the kind that will lead to disunity. So we look for the solution," he told reporters said after chairing the Kelantan Umno Liaison Committee meeting at Rumah Sri Kelantan, here.

To avoid split within the party resulting from the election, Dr Mahathir said the supreme council recently decided that divisional leaders who were also supreme council members should not be challenged.

At the same time, he said supreme council members who were not divisional leaders could not challenge existing divisional leaders.

"He cannot challenge the divisional leader and if he is the divisional leader, others cannot challenge him. He cannot challenge and he cannot be challenged. So it's fair."

For divisional chiefs who were not supreme council members, Dr Mahathir said discussion would be made to avoid a contest.

On today's meeting, Dr Mahathir who is also Kelantan Umno Liaison Chief said the meeting unanimously agreed that all divisional chiefs in Kelantan except in Gua Musang division would not be challenged.

In the Gua Musang division, he said incumbent Saupi Abdul Rahman had agreed not to seek re-election and offered the post to former Parti Melayu Semangat 46 president, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

For the other divisional posts, Dr Mahathir said Kelantan Umno would try to avoid contests too.

"In Kelantan, we agree to focus our attention to strengthening the party. We feel that since we need to strengthen Umno in Kelantan more than in any other places, that's why we come to such an agreement," he said.

Dr said the meeting unanimously acknowledged that the party's struggles superceded that of individuals'.

He said all Umno members in Kelantan must place party's struggles above personal interest and Kelantan Umno would be stronger if its members were united in objective.

"Usually, we lost (in election) not because of our opponents were strong but because of problems within the party. We want to reduce such problems," he said.

He said similar approach was not needed in other states as their opponents were not as strong as in Kelantan. --BERNAMA

AH RAR ABG