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Abdullah-Muhammad

MAT TAIB'S UMNO POST TO BE DECIDED TOMORROW

LUMUT, May 2 (Bernama) -- Former Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib's post in Umno will be decided by the party's Supreme Council (MT) meeting tomorrow, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said the Umno Management and Disciplinary Committee had studied the letter seeking to resume duties as a party vice president submitted by Muhammad as well as the documents and report needed to be tabled at the MT meeting tomorrow which will be chaired by party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Besides Muhammad's case, the committee will also table other cases involving party members as well as all decisions made by the committee for deliberation and decision by the MT, he told reporters after opening the Lumut Umno divisional delegates meeting at the Manjung District Hall at Seri Manjung, near here.

When asked on Muhammad's chances of being allowed to resume his duties as party vice president, Abdullah said: "I don't want to speculate on his (Muhammad's) chances...let me give my views to the MT."

"Don't make me give my views ahead of the MT discussion," he said.

Abdullah, who is also Umno vice president and carrying out the functions of deputy president, said Muhammad, who had been freed of all charges by the Attorney-General last month, had informed him (Abdullah) of the AG's decision and had written to the Management and Disciplinary Committee.

"We had received the letter and understand that Muhammad's case must be decided by the MT itself as the case involved his position as party vice president," he said.

Muhammad, 53, resigned as Menteri Besar in April 1997 and was subsequently granted leave from performing the vice-president's duties by the council pending the settlement of his court cases.

This followed his detention at the Brisbane airport at the end of 1996 for failing to declare currency worth RM2.9 million. In May last year, a court in Australia cleared Muhammad of the charge.

On April 10, the Attorney-General decided to drop the appeal against the High Court's decision to acquit and discharge Muhammad on a charge of failing to declare assets belonging to him and his family.

On his nationwide tour, Abdullah said he found that the spirit of Umno members to strengthen the party was high despite the difficulties faced by the party.

It was very comforting to note there was such awareness among the members and conceded that there was still much to be done to enhance the party's effectiveness, he said.

In fact, he said, Umno members had worked hard throughout unlike the case for some newly emerging political parties.

Umno had always served to bring development to the people, and had always implemented various programmes irrespective of the season, he said.

On the other hand, he said, the opposition parties only emerged or became active only for the general election.

-- BERNAMA

MR AO