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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTION TO BE HELD AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 9 (Bernama) -- The election for posts in the Umno Supreme Council has been deferred until after the general election, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said that the general election, last held in 1995, must be held within 16 months.

"It will be held after the general election. We have only 16 months from now until the last day of Parliament to hold the (general) election," he told reporters after visiting the Immigration Department headquarters, here.

He was asked whether the election for posts in the Supreme Council, now deferred, would be held after the general election, which must be held by April next year.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said that the recent amendment to the party constitution empowers the supreme council to determine the party election.

"If necessary, it can be deferred. For instance, if we are going to have an election and other events, we can always defer the (party) election," he said.

The decision to defer the election for posts in the Umno Supreme Council, scheduled to be held in June this year, was made at the supreme council meeting at the party headquarters yesterday.

Speaking to reporters after the three-hour meeting, Dr Mahathir said that according to the Umno constitution, the supreme council election could be deferred up to 18 months from the date of the Umno general assembly, in June this year.

Dr Mahathir said that the election at branch level would proceed as scheduled in April this year. The divisional election was held last year.

Asked on the setting up of an independent commission to investigate injuries sustained by former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim while in police custody, Dr Mahathir said that the government was studying the matter.

On the suit filed in the High Court by Anwar against him yesterday, Dr Mahathir said that Anwar had every right to do so.

"It will go through the process of law. He has the right to file and the law will follow its course," he said.

Anwar is suing the home minister, former Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Rahim Noor and the Government of Malaysia for damages over alleged assault while he was detained at the police headquarters in Bukit Aman following his arrest on Sept 20.

-- BERNAMA

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