

Majority not in favour of contest for top 2 posts: PM

MOST Umno members, including from the grassroots, support the supreme council's advice that there should be no contest for the top two posts in the party election in May.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said while there were bound to be people with differing views on the matter, the majority believed there should be no contest.

The Prime Minister said this when asked by reporters to comment on the differing views on the supreme council's decision.

The question was posed to him at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport in Kepala Batas, near Alor Star, at the end of a day-long visit to his constituency in Kubang Pasu.

Asked on what basis his conclusion was made as the feedback he got could be only from division leaders, Dr Mahathir said:

"I'm the president...I meet them (Umno members) and they give feedback (on the matter).

"It's the same everywhere, including the grassroots."

The supreme council had resolved that the top two posts should be uncontested and Dr Mahathir be retained as president and Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi unchallenged as deputy.

Dr Mahathir said the supreme council maintained its stand that contests for the two posts were unhealthy for the party as it could cause a split.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir held a closed-door meeting with former State Umno assemblymen and Members of Parliament who either did not contest in the last general election or lost their seats.

Elaborating on the meeting, Dr Mahathir said he advised them to continue playing a part in Umno and also contribute towards efforts to rehabilitate the party.

"I also stressed on the need for them to play a greater role in fighting falsehood spread by opposition parties," he said.

After the meeting, Dr Mahathir spent about two hours meeting his consti-

tuents at the Kubang Pasu Umno office in Jitra.

The Prime Minister met about 100 constituents to attend to their problems.

Later, he had lunch with villagers at Kampung Lubuk Arang at Wang Tepus before visiting the construction site of Sekolah Kebangsaan Bukit Tinggi.

After that, he met more constituents at Kampung Hilir Bukit, also at Titi Tinggi before returning to Kuala Lumpur.

On the proposal by former Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Musa Hitam that Kelantan Umno liaison committee chairman Tenaku Razaleigh Hamzah contest either one of the two top posts, Dr Mahathir said he had no comment on the matter.

"Musa is a free agent and he can give his opinion," he said.

Dr Mahathir who is also Kubang Pasu division chief said the division will not support contests for the president's and deputy president's post in the May party elections. — NST