

10 JAN 2000

Ali-Proposal

ALL FIVE DIVISIONS IN MELAKA SUPPORT NO-CONTEST PROPOSAL

MELAKA, Jan 10 (Bernama) -- All the five Umno divisions in Melaka will nominate Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the party presidency and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for the deputy presidency.

Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Wira Mohamed Ali Rustam said the divisions were heeding the Umno Supreme Council's (MT) advice that there be no contest for the top two posts.

"The Melaka Umno Liaison Committee met on Jan 5 to discuss the proposal and decided to fully support the stand that there be no contest for these two posts," he told reporters today.

Mohamed Ali, who is state Umno chief, was speaking to reporters after attending the Hari Raya open house of Melaka State Assembly Speaker Datuk Amid Nordin in Bachang here.

"We discussed thoroughly the MT's advice and all members of the liaison committee and division heads supported the idea that the posts should not be contested," he said.

"We support the no-contest proposal because we do not want the party to be split, and all five divisions including the grassroots in Melaka support the MT's advice," he said.

A contest would split the party like what had happened in the past and such rifts would take time to mend, he said.

Such problems would weaken and destabilise the party, especially since the party election would be held soon (in May) after the general election, he said.

Mohamed Ali said it was not necessary for the top two posts to be contested because Umno members supported the leadership of Dr Mahathir and Abdullah.

Abdullah was capable of helping Dr Mahathir to tackle the challenges ahead as he had proven himself since being appointed the Deputy Prime Minister, he said.

Meanwhile, Amid, who is Kota Melaka Umno division chief, said the division supported the MT's stand because the two leaders had been accepted even at the grassroots level.

His view was shared by Jasin division chief Datuk Seri Abu Zahar Isnin.

Abu Zahar said Melaka Umno had also decided that the five divisions nominate only Mohamed Ali for re-election to the MT.

In the last party election, Melaka had two candidates for MT seats -- Mohamed Ali and former Chief Minister the late Datuk Seri Mohamed Zin Abdul Ghani -- and both were elected.

-- BERNAMA

MOZ YBY