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Dr M to open Kedah Umno Convention

ALOR STAR, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to open the State Umno Convention at Universiti Utara Malaysia in Sintok near here on April 15.

The theme of the two-day convention would be Umno and the Malay Struggle, State Umno chief and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain said.

Preparations for the convention will be led by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and Sik division chief Senator Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman and Yan division chief Datuk Badruddin Amiruldin.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the State Umno meeting last night, Syed Razak said all Kedah-born living outside the State were invited to participate.

On political development, he said 63 of the 1,813 Umno branches in Kedah failed to hold their annual general meetings before the deadline last month.

However, under the Umno rules, the branches could still hold their meetings a week before the divisional meetings were held, he said.

If the branches failed to hold their meetings by then, they will only be allowed to send observers to the divisional meetings.

On divisional meetings, which kick off tomorrow, Syed Razak said he was confident the delegates would make "good decisions".

Meanwhile, three Kedah Umno division heads were appointed at its meeting last month to sit on the recently formed State Umno Financial Management, Use and Sourcing Committee, which will act as its internal auditor.

Its first job will be to scrutinise past and present accounts.

The three are Pendang Umno chief Datuk Othman Abdul, Kuala Kedah Umno head Datuk Zakaria Said and Jerlun party chairman Datuk Hanafi Ramli. Also selected to sit on the committee were State Umno treasurer Dr Abdul Ghani Shafie, State Umno secretary Osman Md Aji, Alor Star division committee member Ahmad Fatan Sulaiman and Kuala Kedah division youth chief Halim Said.

The committee is headed by Padang Terap division chief Datuk Dr Affifuddin Omar.

Syed Razak said the committee's tasks would include looking into the State Umno expenditure, organising its financial reporting procedures and sourcing for funds.

Asked if it was set up to investigate the State Umno's allegations of election funds which had not been accounted for, he said:

"What investigation? There is no investigation. The setting up of this committee is to strengthen our financial management system."

However, it is learnt that the committee is given extensive powers to look into the possibility of the funds being misused.

Syed Razak also announced that he would not be contesting for a supreme council seat in the party election in May.

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