

11 JAN 2000

Umno-Contest

MORE STATES SUPPORT NO CONTEST FOR TOP TWO UMNO POSTS

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Two more states -- the Federal Territory and Perlis -- have endorsed an Umno Supreme Council suggestion for no contest for the presidency and the deputy president's post in the Umno elections in May.

This brings to four the number of states, after Johor and Melaka, that had so far officially expressed backing for the council's decision on the matter.

Pahang and Perak are expected to follow suit in endorsing the council's stand.

Pahang Umno liaison chief Datuk Adnan Yaakob said today the state party liaison committee would meet next week to discuss several issues, including nominations for the Umno elections.

"I don't expect any problem. We'll abide by the Supreme Council's decision which we reckon is a sound decision," Adnan said.

He told reporters this after attending a session on leadership for 100 Umno members at the Prime Minister's Department here.

At its last meeting in Kuala Lumpur on Jan 3, the council resolved that Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad be re-nominated for the presidency.

It also nominated Deputy Prime Minister and party vice president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for the number two post.

Abdullah has been performing the duties of party deputy president since the expulsion of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in September 1998.

Also at that meeting the council proposed no contest for the two posts in the upcoming party elections.

Adnan said: "I believe allowing contest could split the party. At times democracy, with its imperfections, can disunite. Why can't we adopt the council's decision as a means to preserving party resilience."

Also speaking to reporters after the party function, Federal Territory Umno liaison chairman Datuk Suleiman Mohamed said all the 11 party divisions there have decided to abide the council's advice.

It was crucial that Umno should not pre-occupy itself with the scramble for positions among members at a time when dealing with its enemies was uppermost, he said.

"We're still facing PAS, Keadilan and other opposition parties. If there's a struggle for top party posts how are we to face enemies outside," he said.

Perlis Umno liaison chief Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said that in the interest of party unity all the three party divisions in the state fully supported the council's decision.

Perak Umno liaison chief Datuk Tajol Rosli Ghazali said the state party liaison committee would meet next week to discuss the council's decision, among other things.

Tajol Rosli said that personally he fully agreed with the council's advice on no contest for the Umno presidency and deputy president's post in the coming party elections.

-- BERNAMA

MAM HS RYN