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Move for party polls after general election

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Umno elections will be held in the same year as the general election if an amendment to the party's election process is endorsed by a special general assembly next month.

Vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today the proposal called for elections at the branch, division and national levels to be carried out within a few months after the general election.

"It has received strong support. The aim is to reduce contest (frequency) for posts in the party, thus allowing members to concentrate more on other beneficial activities."

Elections at the three levels are now held separately once every three years.

Muhyiddin, who chairs the committee studying amendments to the party's constitution, was speaking to reporters after participating in the "New Millennium Tree Planting" campaign at Taman Bukit Jalil. The event was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Muhyiddin said another amendment involved increasing the number of seats in the supreme council and divisional committees. This is to give more members an opportunity to serve the party.

For the party's highest decision-making body, the proposal is to have an additional five more seats compared to 25 now. At divisions, it will be increased from 15 to 20.

The ruling requiring candidates to secure enough nominations from divisions before contesting will also be abolished.

In its place, aspiring candidates need only register their intention to contest.

Another proposal, said Muhyiddin, was on the creation of a special board to hear all disciplinary cases, with the members picked by the supreme council. Muhyiddin said besides party veterans, members of the board would comprise those with excellent records and not holding any party posts.

"The establishment of this board will reduce the burden of the management committee which is now also responsible for disciplinary cases."

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