

16 NOV 2000

Umno-Abdullah

MT DECIDES TO RETAIN TRIENNIAL PARTY POLLS

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- The Umno Supreme Council (MT) at its meeting here today decided to retain the triennial election for the MT and Umno divisions and not coincide it with the tenure of the Dewan Rakyat.

Umno Deputy President Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who chaired the meeting said this decision meant the earlier draft proposal to align party polls to the duration of the Dewan Rakyat, approved by the MT at its last meeting, was now cancelled.

"The MT also decided to hold branch elections once in three years instead of once in two years as at present," the Deputy Prime Minister said after chairing the meeting at party headquarters here.

"With this amendment we will be able to coordinate in the same year the elections at the three levels. This also means that branch level elections will not be held that often," Abdullah said.

Replying to a question, Abdullah said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had already been informed of the decisions taken at today's meeting.

"The party president has no problems at all and leaves it to the MT," he added.

Dr Mahathir who is now in the Brunei capital of Bandar Seri Begawan for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit is expected to return to Kuala Lumpur later tonight.

Asked as to his advice to party members who wanted the earlier draft proposals to be carried through, he said, "My advice to them is to understand what we have come up with following our discussions in the supreme council and the management committee after taking into consideration the views that have been expressed."

Abdullah said all proposals and views submitted to the Chairman of the Constitution Amendment Committee Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had been deliberated upon at the three meetings of the Disciplinary and Management Committee and at the three MT meetings.

Even though there may be divisions who felt that their proposals represented the views of many, they should also understand that there were also other divisions whose views differed from theirs, he said.

"Hence we have taken into account all these views and also the input given by the MT members and so we have agreed that certain proposals for amendment of the constitution be made."

He said the MT also discussed Umno's preparations for the Lunas state by-election in Kedah later this month.

"We took the opportunity to discuss the role of Umno Liaison Committees in the country in the BN campaign."

Abdullah said all the liaison committees would send election workers and also speakers to Lunas.

The by-election is being held following the death of the assemblyman Dr Joe Fernandez of the Barisan Nasional on Nov 4.

The Election Commission has fixed Nov 21 for nomination of candidates and polling will be on Nov 29.

-- BERNAMA

MAD RZS ZS AAM