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Mustapa throws a dare to branches

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Umno information chief Datuk Mustapa Mohamed today challenged all branches to implement three supreme council policies to prove their determination to improve people's confidence in the party.

The move calls for them to set up a Puteri Umno pro-tem committee at the branch level, to train party members to be closer to the people and to present views on the proposed amendments to their constitution.

Mustapa, when throwing the challenge, said divisions and branches should not wait for any official directive from party headquarters before implementing the decisions or policies.

He said this during the Umno Federal Territory's forum on Challenges and Future of the Malays at the Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur auditorium.

"Leaders at branch and divisional levels should carry out activities as well as inculcate new values to attract more Malays, in particular the younger generation, where there is a need to explain the party's struggle clearly.

"Challenges will not only come from outside, but also from within if members concentrate on fighting for posts instead of trying to get closer to the people," he said during his winding-up speech at the forum.

Panel members for the forum were supreme council members Datuk Shafie Apdal, Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Azalina Othman Said.

Opened by the Federal Territory Umno liaison chairman Datuk Tengku Adnan Mansor, the forum was attended by 506 branch and divisional leaders.

The supreme council last month decided to establish Puteri Umno to attract the younger generation to join the party.

Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said the new entity would be for women below 40 years of age.

"We must try to convince the people that Umno is the party which fights for Islam and that no other party can defend the interest of the race, religion and country," Mustapa said.

He added branches and divisions must work with the people from now on and should avoid internal contests as this could affect party unity.

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