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Abdullah-Umno

NO PACT BETWEEN KEPALA BATAS AND KUBANG PASU, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, March 7 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said there is no pact between the Kepala Batas Umno division that he heads and the Kubang Pasu division in nominating candidates for the party elections in May.

Kubang Pasu is headed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is also Umno president.

"I don't have any pact with Dr Mahathir to nominate certain names. If the same names get nominated, it's just a coincidence," he told reporters who approached him on the matter after opening the Malaysian International Furniture Fair 2000 here today.

He was asked whether his division would nominate the same candidates named by Kubang Pasu, in particular nominees for the three vice president posts.

Abdullah is an Umno vice-president performing the duties of the deputy president.

For the past two Umno elections, Kubang Pasu did not nominate anyone to contest for Umno Supreme Council posts to maintain a semblance of impartiality.

However, the council which met yesterday, ruled that all divisions should, without exception, name candidates for the vice-president posts and other council positions.

The directive followed the Tawau Umno division's decision to name only two candidates for the vice-presidency at its delegates' conference last week.

Even so, the Tawau Umno nominations are valid according to party rules.

Reporters also asked Abdullah whether, following the council's ruling, party members could misinterpret the impending nominations by Kubang Pasu as partisan.

"It's inevitable that various quarters will misinterpret as they pleased whatever we do.

"There's not much that we can do. It was decided yesterday and there is no exemption. All divisions must nominate in full and we'll carry out the Supreme Council's decision," he added.

-- BERNAMA

AFY RYN