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Mahathir-Elections

SUPREME COUNCIL'S DECISION ON PARTY ELECTIONS ONLY A SUGGESTION

ALOR SETAR, Jan 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today it is up to the Umno divisions whether or not to abide by the supreme council's suggestion that there not be any contest for the top two posts in the party in the May elections.

That was their right, the prime minister told reporters on arrival at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport in Kepala Batas, near here, for a short visit to the state.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on a statement in a newspaper by an Umno division committee member in Negeri Sembilan today that Umno was sidelining democracy by not having contests for the president's and deputy president's posts.

"It is a supreme council decision, not mine. I don't care if there are divisions which disagree. It is their right.

"We need not listen to what people say. The supreme council is only advising, it's alright if (they) don't want to listen," he said.

Dr Mahathir said no action would be take against any division that disagreed with the council's suggestion.

The supreme council, at its meeting in Kuala Lumpur on Monday, proposed that Dr Mahathir be re-nominated as party president and Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi be nominated for the post of deputy president.

Abdullah, a vice-president, is now carrying out the duties of the deputy president following the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the party and government in 1998.

The council had proposed that the top two party posts not be contested.

-- BERNAMA

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