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Syed Hamid: Up to divisions to decide on no-contest stand

ALOR STAR, Sun. - Umno supreme council member Datuk Syed Hamid Albar said Umno divisions had not been directed not to nominate other leaders other than the Prime Minister and his deputy for the top two party posts at their meetings next month.

The supreme council's resolution that there should be no contest for the posts in the May party elections was merely a stand for the divisions to consider.

"The council has only advised the divisions to nominate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and, in accordance with the principle of democracy, it is leaving it to the divisions to decide (on the candidacies)," he said.

Syed Hamid, who is also Foreign Minister, said the resolution was supported by all supreme council members, including Kelantan liaison chief Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

"As a supreme council member, I will support the council's stand.

"My division and the divisions in Johor for that matter have no problem ... we solidly stand behind the supreme council's decision," said Syed Hamid, who is Kota Tinggi division chief and Johor Umno liaison committee deputy chief.

The Umno supreme council had resolved that the top two posts should be uncontested and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad be retained as president and Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi unchallenged as deputy.

Speaking to reporters after calling on Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain today, Syed Hamid said he wanted to serve the party more effectively and that was why he had offered himself for one of the vice-president's posts.

However, he stressed that aspirants for party posts should always put the party above personal ambition.

"Contests are good but if it does not benefit the party, then don't contest," he added.

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