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Tawau nominates Dr M and Abdullah for top two posts

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TAWAU, Thurs. - Tawau Umno today became the first division to nominate Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for president and deputy president in the May party election.

The nominations were consistent with the supreme council's advice in January which proposed that the top two party posts be uncontested. Tawau division was the first of the 165 Umno divisions in the country to hold its meeting which, among others, sought to nominate candidates for supreme council positions.

Apart from that, the meetings will decide on delegates to be sent from the respective divisions to take part and vote during the party general assembly on May 11.

In today's meeting, all 470 delegates from the division unanimously nominated Dr Mahathir and Abdullah for the two top posts.

The division's youth and Wanita wings, which held their meetings at the same venue, also made their nominations for the movements' leadership. The youth wing nominated Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir for the movement's chief and deputy respectively. The division's women's wing, meanwhile, nominated Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and Datuk Sharizat Abdul Jalil for Wanita chief and deputy respectively.

The post of Wanita chief is currently held by Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman and Datuk Napsiah Omar as her deputy.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting at Dewan Masyarakat Tawau, division head Datuk Ghapur Salleh said: "The decision of the Tawau division today can be emulated by other divisions throughout the country to maintain unity in the party.

"We (Tawau Umno) are united and adhere to the party's supreme council decision ... the unanimous support via show of hands here augurs well for the party at all levels.

"Not only did the delegates raise their hands, they also stood up when I proposed the nominations. The meeting was over in about half an hour." Ghapur said what was seen in Tawau today could be the trend in the 19 other divisions in Sabah and probably the majority of the other divisions in Peninsular Malaysia.

Asked why the division only nominated two candidates for the vice-president posts, he said it was a decision by the delegates.

The division has nominated Datuk Seri Osu Sukam and Tan Sri Mohd Isa Samad for the vice-president posts.

The meeting also saw Ghafur proposing the names of seven candidates to be the division's delegates to the May general assembly.

Ghapur, when proposing the seven names from 85 candidates, said: "To avoid a split and unhappiness among those who fail to be delegates, I will announce seven names for your (delegates) endorsement."

The delegates supported the proposal unanimously and the seven names were read out by Ghapur amid applause of the delegates and hundreds of observers.

"It is not against the party's constitution," he said.

After the meeting, Ghapur left for Kuala Lumpur to attend a meeting of all Umno divisional heads with Dr Mahathir tomorrow.

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