

18 NOV 2000

Umno-Closed

UMNO ASSEMBLY GOES INTO CLOSED DOOR SESSION

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- The Umno Special General Assembly called to amend the party constitution is being held behind closed doors at the Dewan Merdeka of the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

This is the first time that the Umno General Assembly is being held behind closed doors with only the delegates and observers present.

Hundreds of local and foreign news reporters did not have the opportunity to follow the debate in the hall or via closed circuit TV.

Hundreds of Umno members who had gathered at the PWTC lobby to watch the debate were also not able to do so and instead they wandered around the area.

The closed circuit TVs instead played back the speeches of Umno President and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad made during previous general assemblies.

Umno Secretary-General and Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob explaining the move, said, "We felt that this will enable the delegates to speak more openly without any feeling of being restricted."

Despite this development, the atmosphere outside the hall remained cheerful like during previous assemblies with members who were not delegates to the assembly moving around the food and clothing stalls and chatting away happily.

-- BERNAMA

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