

Umno to rid party of phantom members

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun: Umno is updating its membership list to get rid of "phantom members and branches".

Party vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said checks conducted recently on these phantom branches showed that their members are from other branches.

He said the party supreme council has advised all branches to update their membership list, including identifying members who have died, shifted to other areas or have left the party. This will also help to eliminate phantom members.

Asked how serious the problem of phantom branches is, he said: "This phenomenon is new in the party the existence of phantom branches is not serious but it raises a question.

Najib was speaking at a press conference after launching an Umno Federal Territory (FT) new membership drive campaign.

Present was the party's FT liaison committee chairman Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor.

Najib said the existence of

highlighted the existence of phantom branches, saying that it is serious in the Federal Territory, where certain leaders are out to protect their positions.

Tengku Adnan said those set up the "ghost branches" should leave as this will cause serious damage to the party.

On the membership drive, Najib said some 87,900 new members have joined the party nationwide since June 30.

He said Kedah recorded the highest membership intake, with 21,743 new members, Terengganu with 12,359 members and FT with 6,631 members.

The other states are still in the process of finalising their new membership lists.

Umno currently, has about 2.3 million members nationwide.

Najib also said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Umno supreme council meeting last week, requested all branches to take seriously the membership drive.

He said there is a need to register new members as voters for the next general election.

phantom branches is quite serious in FT but not in other states.

"There are only one or two of such cases in other states. From what we know, the phantom branches were created by certain leaders to strengthen their positions, especially during the party election," he said.

Earlier, Tengku Adnan had