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70pc newcomers in Umno Youth divisions

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The on-going Umno Youth divisional meetings have resulted in the elections of some 70 per cent newcomers as the division heads, said Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein today.

He said of the 153 divisions which have concluded their meetings so far, 102 have newcomers and the rest are incumbents. (These figures are valid until today).

The balance of 12 divisions are scheduled to conclude their meetings by Sunday.

"We hope these people would inject new spirit into the movement, help to strengthen the party and gain the support of the younger generation," he said.

Hishammuddin, who is also the Youth and Sports Minister, said this after chairing an Umno Youth executive council meeting at the party headquarters in Putra World Trade Centre.

Hishammuddin said a State youth head and four executive council members had lost in the elections. Of these, three contested for division head posts and the other two for division posts.

"We also have to think about new State heads, as nine of the current 13 have reached the 40-years age limit and can no longer hold the post."

He also said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would meet all Umno Youth division heads and their committee members on May 29 at the PWTC.

Asked to comment on Umno Youth executive council member and Lumut Youth head Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir's decision to contest the Lumut division head post, Hishammuddin said it was up to Zambry to make a decision on the matter.

"However, I have advised Zambry, and all other exco members who have lost, that they are still Umno Youth exco members and that their priority should be to strengthen the movement among the youths," he said.

Zambry is scheduled to challenge incumbent Datuk Mohd Wajdi Ishak during the Lumut division meeting on Sunday.

On complaints by some Umno Youth members that certain division heads and State liaison committee tried to influence the divisional Youth line-up, Hishammuddin said the matter would not arise if Umno Youth had a good relationship with the members.

"If we are very influential at the grassroot level, then no one can influence the divisional line-up as the members and delegates would surely continue to support us."

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