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Abdullah: Don't use board for personal gains

Abdul Razak Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Concerned with the number of complaints lodged over alleged discrepancies in the conduct of Umno divisional meetings, party deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi reminded members not to make complaints just for the sake of complaining.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the party's management committee meeting at Umno headquarters at Menara Dato' Onn today, Abdullah said the committee members and the party's disciplinary board had received more than 300 complaints.

"I hope that members will not seek the easy way out by making accusations just to see if their complaints stick, just because there is a disciplinary board".

Abdullah said complaints should be made responsibly and only if there was a case.

He added that disciplinary action could be taken against those who made serious allegations but had no proof.

Abdullah expressed his disappointment with irresponsible complaints which had been lodged.

"When they lose, they find faults, and even those who have won have this and that complaint."

Abdullah said this sometimes made the conduct of the divisional meeting go awry.

However, Abdullah said all complaints would be looked into.

Among those who lodged their complaints, Abdullah said, were those who had lost the elections and felt that they had been wronged.

He said the long hours spent examining the complaints would have been better utilised if they were spent on beneficial activities.

To a question, Abdullah said most complaints which were submitted to him were sent complete with proof.

He said they had all been forwarded to the disciplinary board.

Abdullah was also asked on confusion arising from allegations that three branches in the Bukit Bintang division had not been allowed to take part in the divisional meeting but that the decision was cancelled later.

Abdullah said initial investigations found problems regarding the validity of the three branches. Following an appeal by the division, the Registrar of Societies gave the branches its approval.

As a general rule, Abdullah reminded members to bear in mind the principle that if a branch was invalid, its Youth and Wanita meetings were also invalid.

"But if the division meeting was conducted properly, then the invalidity of a branch delegate attending does not annul the division meeting."

On another matter, Abdullah was asked about complaints made by family members of the Opposition members arrested under the Internal Security Act.

"I leave it to the police," he said.

Abdullah said the meeting also discussed preparations to celebrate Umno Day on May 11. He said the event would also include a dialogue between Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and party veterans.