

18 JAN 2001

Umno-Programme

MAHATHIR TO VISIT UMNO DIVISIONS UNDER NEW PARTY PROGRAMME

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- Umno has launched a new programme that provides party leaders at the middle and lower echelons the opportunity to obtain explanations on current issues from the top leaders.

Called "Bertanya Khabar", it would see party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself visiting Umno divisions to meet members.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, who announced this today, said the party was in the midst of drawing up the programme.

"We are coordinating the visits which are expected to begin shortly. Several divisions have been identified," he told reporters after taking part in a dialogue via the Internet.

Khalil said the programme was important as it enabled party members to get to know their leaders from the branch level to the top.

There would be no more inactive branches as branch leaders would see that attention was being given to them too, he said.

Khalil also announced that that new party disciplinary board, under the chairmanship of Tengku Ahmad Rithaudeen, would include 12 Umno "old faces".

"They have given their agreement and their names will be announced at the Umno Supreme Council meeting in Melaka," he said.

The members of the board would be increased if there were many disciplinary cases could not be settled within a certain period, he said.

Meanwhile, the Internet dialogue saw Khalil answering 12 questions during the 40-minute live session, mostly on political issues concerning Umno.

Replying to one of the questions, Khalil said Umno branch leaders had no right to reject applications and fees from any member.

Asked why Umno allowed some branches to remain inactive, he said party headquarters had distributed forms to the divisions to give feedback on the branches.

"I am not saying they (branches) are sleeping...some of the branches are active only when there is an election. But we want every branch to hold activities throughout the year," he said.

To a question on the proposed Umno-PAS talks, Khalil said Umno did not have any specific agenda apart from discussions on Malay unity.

--BERNAMA

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