

30 MAY 2001

Abdullah-Baling

RAJA ARIFIN'S APPOINTMENT SHOULD NOT BE OPPOSED, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, May 30 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Umno president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the group of 114 branch leaders in the Baling Umno division should not oppose the appointment of Raja Datuk Arifin Raja Sulaiman as the division head.

"(They) should not object because it is our (Umno supreme council's) decision," he told reporters after chairing the Umno Management Committee meeting here.

He was asked to comment on the action of the 114 branch leaders who signed a memorandum opposing the appointment of Raja Arifin to replace Datuk Zainol Mohamed Isa who was stripped of the division chairman's post after being found guilty of indulging in money politics.

The division's committee member, Wan Mahmud Wan Ibrahim, who is the group's spokesman, had said that Raja Arifin's appointment contravened the Umno constitution because the deputy head was not appointed as acting head.

Article 15.7 of the Umno constitution states that in the event the division head cannot discharge his duties due to dismissal, illness or death, his deputy will act as the head.

Abdullah said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had explained earlier that any division head found guilty would be replaced by his opponent in the election for the post.

Abdullah said the winner in the divisional election had been disqualified.

"The issue is that the winner has been disqualified so the issue of his holding the post no longer arises," he said.

He said no solution would be achieved if the members opposed it everytime Umno made a decision.

-- BERNAMA

RZS RZS JK