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Umno-Youth/Wanita

YOUTH/WANITA ASSEMBLIES - A PLATFORM TO ENHANCE THE MOVEMENTS

By: Jamaluddin Muhammad and Nor Hayati Muda

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 (Bernama) -- The Youth and Wanita assemblies on Wednesday will be made a platform by the two wings to strengthen their movements but with a different approach.

While the Umno Youth is expected to focus on its direction and action-oriented agenda, the Wanita Umno, satisfied with its members' cooperation, would pay attention to women's role in national development.

The youth is also expected to focus the delegates' thinking towards the spirit of struggle and to create a new mood in them.

" With the spirit and new mood, the youth can make 2001 as the year of the movement's revival in line with the wishes of the Umno top leadership for the movement to pave the way towards Umno's enhancement," its assistant secretary Zulkifli Alwi told BERNAMA today.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in his recent message to the movement, had stressed on three main priorities -- increase membership, register party members as voters and open operations rooms.

Zulkifli said the spirit of struggle and a new mood were vital as the movement was dealt a severe blow after the 1999 general election and present challenges, including the movement's image and Malay special rights.

" It is hoped the assembly will set the mood in the movement to be in the general election mood at all times to enable the leaders and members to work throughout as though the general election will be held tomorrow," he said.

Also at the assembly, the movement is expected to give attention to efforts to endear themselves to the people to assist in solving their problems, he said.

Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, in a media conference on Friday, said the movement was satisfied with the existing leadership structure and there was no need for a reshuffle as the wing was stable and united in all states.

Nonetheless, she would ask every member to work harder in the interests of Umno and the people, she said.

A total of 689 youth and 635 wanita delegates are expected to attend their one-day assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

The youth assembly will be held at Dewan Tun Dr Ismail while the wanita at Dewan Tun Hussein Onn.

Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is expected to open the assemblies simultaneously in Dewan Merdeka at 8am.

Meanwhile, Puteri Umno will for the first time make an appearance at the Umno General Assembly from Wednesday till Saturday at the PWTC.

Its pro tem head Azalina Othman Said said the movement would take advantage of the assembly to introduce themselves to the delegates and the people besides launching its campaign to increase its membership.

" Together with the Civil Action Bureau (headed by Azalina), the movement will carry out several community activities during the assembly," she said in a statement today.

Azalina said the public are invited to the service, complaints and legal aid centres to be opened at PWTC during the assembly to follow closely the activities carried out by the movement.

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