

PM: Allow members to join Puteri Umno

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'Wanita should not block their move'

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JITRA, Thurs. -- Wanita Umno must allow its members who are below the age of 35 to join Puteri Umno if they opted to do so, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Dr Mahathir also warned all party members not to block the entry of new members into Puteri Umno.

"I admit, that if members shift from Wanita Umno to Puteri Umno, it would not lead to an increase in the overall membership of the party.

"But even as such, we want those with wide experience who are in Wanita Umno to join Puteri Umno and help lead the movement.

"Wanita Umno must allow them to be Puteri Umno members," said Dr Mahathir when opening the Kubang Pasu Umno division annual delegates' meeting at the Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Pulau Nyior, here.

Dr Mahathir is Kubang Pasu Umno division chief.

He said having experienced Wanita Umno members who are below the age of 35 joining Puteri Umno would foster "good" relations between the two movements,

The party president said he

placed much hope on Puteri Umno to attract the younger generation to the party's struggle.

"We find many from the younger generation are interested in joining Umno, so they must be welcomed as the people who are continuing the struggle of our party.

"Let not anyone block the entry of Puteri Umno members."

Dr Mahathir said some quarters were claiming that Puteri Umno only had 730 members. Puteri has rebutted the claim and say they have 80,000 members. Dr Mahathir said neither claims were true.

"You see, I recently went to a seminar organised by Puteri Umno and the attendance there was about 1,000 people, and not all Puteri Umno members came, so how can it be that Puteri Umno only has 730 members?"

Dr Mahathir said Puteri Umno had "many members", but the process of admitting new members into the movement was sometimes "blocked".

"We must welcome the entry of Puteri Umno members, so that we can get the younger generation to understand the struggle of Umno," he said.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that he wants Puteri Umno to develop as an independent wing within Umno, similar to Wanita Umno and Umno Youth.

"Today Puteri Umno is still at the pro-tern stage but we hope that after the annual general meeting next month, Puteri Umno can be formally recognised as a wing within the party."

On another matter, Dr Mahathir said all members should strive to increase party membership from the younger generation.

He said although each division had been instructed to increase membership by 10 per cent, those which had reached the target should now surpass it.

He said the re-generation of Umno with the inclusion of younger members into Youth and Puteri movements was vital to ensure the party's continued survival.

Dr Mahathir also reminded those holding power in the party that they should realise they could not remain in power forever.

He said some members were reluctant to accept new members as they viewed them as threats who could challenge their positions.

As such, Dr Mahathir warned members at national, divisional and branch levels, not to create obstacles or prevent younger members from joining the party.

"Unless we are able to get new members from the younger generation, the party will die off along with this generation."