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Muhyiddin-Ambition

UMNO LEADERS SHOULD SET ASIDE PERSONAL AMBITIONS, SAYS MUHYIDDIN

KUALA LUMPUR, July 3 (Bernama) -- Second echelon leaders in Umno should set aside personal political ambitions in the current transition period, party vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

Instead, they should aspire to further develop the country and consolidate Umno, the lynchpin of the governing Barisan Nasional (BN), he said.

He said Umno members and leaders should pay heed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's advice to preserve party unity and ensure Umno was intact at all levels.

Commenting on Dr Mahathir's assurance to support his successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, after he steps down as Prime Minister, Umno president and Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman in October next year, Muhyiddin said the second echelon leaders in Umno should accept Dr Mahathir's advice.

Dr Mahathir returned today from a 10-day holiday in Italy.

Muhyiddin said Dr Mahathir, during the televised media conference upon his return from vacation, made it clear that he wanted to see the party remained intact and there should be no infighting or squabbling.

"He (Dr Mahathir) must be directing to the top echelon of Umno because we believe this is where the strength lies," he said.

Asked about jostling for Umno deputy president's post once Abdullah becomes Umno president and Prime Minister, Muhyiddin, who is Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister, said he welcomed Dr Mahathir's advice that there should be no power struggle during the transition period.

"As Umno members, we should respect the wishes of the party president to place party interests above personal interests.

"It is a very important message to Umno members because we want to see the prevailing unity in the party to remain intact so that there will be no crisis during the transition period and after that.

"What's important is, we want to pursue Umno's agenda," he said.

"Hence, I believe Malaysians will accept Dr Mahathir's intention with an open heart. Umno members should also accept the president's advice and cooperate to ensure the transition process proceeds smoothly," he said.

Another vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said he was confident there would be no power struggle among party members during the transition period.

"God Willing, there'll be no scramble for posts," said Najib, who is Defence Minister.

He said Umno would emerge stronger if party members gave priority to unity and made decisions with wisdom.

Party members should always remember Dr Mahathir's advice to give preference to party interests over all others, he added.

Another vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Taib said Umno members should not reject leaders and leaders should also know the right time to bow out graciously as was done by Dr Mahathir.

He said instability would occur in the party if there was a power struggle which would also affect the country and economy.

"Dr Mahathir's message that there should be no scramble for power and posts was an important advice for Umno members to uphold," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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