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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO MEMBERS MAY SWITCH BRANCH, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 24 (Bernama) -- Umno is allowing its members to switch branch before branch-level elections begin next month, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Dr Mahathir, the party president, said members would also not be prevented from joining any branch of their choice.

"The (Umno) Supreme Council has decided that there will be no effort to stop members from joining any branch or switch to another branch from their present branch," he told a press conference after chairing a meeting of the council.

Umno elections at the branch level will be held from Feb 16 to March 16 and at the divisional level from March 17 to April 30. The party general assembly will take place in June.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the party deputy president, said today's meeting also agreed that branches and divisions may postpone their meetings if many of their members would be performing their haj at the time.

He said branches wishing to postpone meetings must, however, submit their applications through their divisions which need to give their approval.

As for divisions seeking postponements, they must submit the applications through the respective state liaison committees.

Abdullah also said Puteri Umno members who applied to join the party at the branch level would be allowed to attend branch meetings as registered members.

Today's meeting also discussed Barisan Nasional's performance in the Indera Kayangan by-election last Saturday.

"We feel we have been able to identify the BN's weaknesses and strengths in Indera Kayangan. This will serve as a lesson for us," said Dr Mahathir.

The prime minister congratulated Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim and members of Umno Youth, Wanita Umno and Puteri Umno for their efforts in ensuring a BN win in the by-election.

-- BERNAMA

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