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Abdullah-Umno

OBEY LEADERS' ORDERS TO ENSURE UMNO'S STRENGTH, UMNO MEMBERS TOLD

KANGAR, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi tonight asked Umno members to obey party leaders' instructions to ensure Umno remained strong and influential party.

They should also give preference to unity and be loyal to Umno, he said when speaking at a function to mark Barisan Nasional's victory in the Jan 19 Indera Kayangan state by-election.

Abdullah, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, said Umno's strength would be evident if party members gave priority to the three qualities.

"Umno members at all party levels must listen and carry out the leaders' directives besides preserving unity and displaying loyalty," he said.

He said the qualities were enough to turn Umno into a respected party not only because of its strength at branch and division levels but also at the higher level.

"Umno's strength at branch level is important. If branches are not strong, divisions will also not be strong, when divisions are not strong, the whole party will be weak," he said.

Abdullah said Umno branch meetings are crucial as the voices of grassroots members would be the thrust of debate and discussions at the Umno General Assembly.

"Don't think branch meetings are not important. All party members must attend the meetings. In some branches, more women than men attended the meetings," he said.

He also reiterated his regret over PAS's move to put Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and ulamas at loggerheads.

He said Umno is a ulama-friendly party and had never exploited Islam to gain power.

He said Dr Mahathir always sought views from ulamas, including from outside Umno, and university lecturers on certain issues.

Abdullah also urged Umno leaders at all levels to study the party's victories and defeats in elections in preparation for the next general election due in 2004.

"Don't do a post-mortem only when we lose and do nothing when we win. When we win, we must look into the contributory factors to be used as a guide in future.

"We should not start thinking on what to do only when an election is held," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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