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Abdullah-Speculation

ABDULLAH WANTS UMNO MEMBERS TO STOP MAKING SPECULATIVE STATEMENTS

KEPALA BATAS, July 21 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today called on Umno members and leaders to stop making any speculative statement on who will be selected as candidates for the general election and other posts.

The Deputy Prime Minister said such statements should not be made by party members and leaders as it could cause uneasiness at Umno branch and division levels.

He said this when asked to comment on the statement by Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim last week that certain groups in the party had made threats that his position as Menteri Besar would be in jeopardy after October following the power transition in Umno and the government.

"Statements in the form of speculation should not be made by anyone because speculation remains a speculation, we don't want the speculation to create a storm in any Umno division or branch," he said at a media conference after launching the National Cooperatives Day at the Millennium Hall, here.

Abdullah, who is also Umno deputy president, has been named by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as his successor when he relinquishes his position as Prime Minister and Umno president after the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit meeting in Kuala Lumpur in October.

When asked for his advice on the allegation by Shahidan, Abdullah said: "I don't know, it is something that Shahidan has to tackle himself, it's a personal matter, he has received threats and so on.

"But I believe we have not yet decided on who will become elected representatives and (who) fills certain posts at this moment and I have not talked with anyone (on the matter)," he said.

However, he hoped that on one in the party would make any speculative statement to ensure that no "storm" was created at Umno branches and divisions.

"Sometimes, statements made by any Umno leader that are speculative in nature can create uneasiness for other leaders as they too have their own supporters.

"Therefore, we have to be very careful whenever we make a statement, do not create frustration and uneasiness (for others)," he said.

Following Shahidan's statement, Arau Umno division head Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad had issued a statement saying that he did not want his name linked to speculations as to who would become the Perlis Menteri Besar after the 11th general election.

Asked whether other leaders besides Shahidan had received similar political threats, Abdullah said: "(I) don't know, that's the only one that I've I heard."

--BERNAMA

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