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Hishammuddin: Umno Youth must prepare for general election

GUA MUSANG, Fri. - Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein has ordered the movement's machinery at all levels to focus on the general election from now on to enhance their state of preparedness.

He said during this period, all members of the movement should set aside personal interests, including their ambition to contest for posts in the next party elections.

"It is pointless for us to hold the post of the national, State or divisional Umno Youth chiefs if the party were to lose in the general election," he said.

Hishammuddin, who is also Youth and Sports Minister, was speaking after the launching of the telephone service and handing over of keys to recipients of houses under the Development Programme for the Hardcore Poor.

Yesterday, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that all Umno divisions, Youth, Wanita and Puteri movements had been directed to conduct dry runs for the next general election.

Dr Mahathir, however, said the move was not an indication that the election would be held soon.

Hishammuddin said it was important for Umno Youth members to remain focused to ensure the party would win handsomely in the next election instead of thinking about winning positions in the party.

"Our task is to strengthen Umno. I will not entertain tales on contests for party positions," he said.

He said once the party leadership had decided on the date for party elections, anybody could offer himself to contest for any post including the Umno Youth chief post he is holding.

Hishammuddin said he would not hesitate to change any of the State Umno youth chiefs who caused disunity.

"I will monitor the situation closely to ensure the movement is united. My responsibility is to ensure that only those who can bring the members together are appointed," he said.

He refuted talk that there was a split in Kelantan Umno Youth.

"State Umno Youth chief Rujhan Salleh has told me that there is no such thing," he said.