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Umno divisions to be dissolved (HL)

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Umno supreme council today decided to dissolve all Umno divisions and will appoint pro-tem committee members for the 165 existing divisions and 25 new ones that will be set up with the constituency redelineation exercise.

The appointments will be based on recommendations of State liaison committees.

Party deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the committees could be made up of either incumbents or new faces who would be in charge until the party elections next year. The dissolution and pro-tem committee appointments will include the Youth, Wanita and Puteri movements.

"We will decide later on the exact date when the divisional committees will be dissolved," said Abdullah at a Press conference after the supreme council meeting at the party headquarters at Putra World Trade Centre.

Abdullah, who is the Deputy Prime Minister, was replying to questions on whether the council had decided on the proposal to dissolve the 165 divisional committees and replace them with protem ones.

The question was posed to Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who asked party secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob to reply. Khalil then referred the matter to Abdullah.

Abdullah had said recently the supreme council must first agree to the proposal to dissolve all divisional committees and replace them with protem ones before getting the views of the 165 divisions.

Vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said yesterday the management committee which made the proposal would submit a report to the supreme council today on the matter based on discussions at their meeting.

On June 24, the Dewan Rakyat passed the Federal Constitution (Amendment) Bill followed by the Dewan Negara on July 3 which would see the creation of 25 new parliamentary seats, bringing the total to 219 from 194.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir reminded the supreme council members on the collective responsibility principle, including on decisions made by other party leaders.

"We must be accountable for all decisions, be those done now or in the past and by those who are no longer with us."

Dr Mahathir said there were times when a leader claimed that he was not responsible for a decision as it was not made by him.

Asked why he was issuing the reminder now, Dr Mahathir replied: "This is not new. I have to remind on and off as we are forgetful people. Melayu mudah lupa (Malays are forgetful)."

Dr Mahathir also said that party leaders must have a good relationship with administrative officers and listen to their views in implementing all decisions made by the Umno-led State Governments.

He said that the supreme council also directed all branches and divisions to conduct dry runs in preparation for the next general election.

"These runs will prepare the party members and workers to carry out their duties during the elections.

"We also agreed that all candidates representing Umno should officially declare their assets before the election. We have also recorded our appreciation to our permanent chairman (Tun Sulaiman Ninam Shah who died of leukaemia on July 5)."

