

**Cheras Umno wants open contest**  
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The Cheras Umno division last night called for all top posts in the party, including those of president and deputy president, be contested in the coming party polls. MCPX

The division also said that it was time for the abolition of the quota system for nominations in order to contest the top posts.

This move by the Cheras division, the first division to do so in the run up to the party polls, comes at the back of an announcement by veteran Umno leader Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah to contest for the president's post.

syed ali al habsheeHowever Cheras division head Syed Ali Al-Habshee quickly distanced himself and his division from backing Tengku Razaleigh.

"If the top two posts are not contested, we will not be able to know the actual strength of the president and deputy president in the party," he told reporters after the meeting last night.

He believed contests for the top two posts would not in any way weaken the party.

### **Two nominations enough**

In all the division passed 12 resolutions at the special meeting, which also discussed Barisan Nasional's poor performance in the recent general election.

The division's resolutions would be submitted to Umno's supreme council, which is meeting tomorrow.

On the resolution to abolish the quota system, Syed Ali said the party should revert to its original principles whereby a candidate only required two nominations in order to contest the top two posts.

Presently a candidate needs 35 and 20 nominations to contest for the post of president or deputy president respectively. This strict ruling has hampered many aspiring candidates to offer a successful challenge for the top posts.

tengku razaleighIn 2004, Tengku Razaleigh's challenge against party president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi came to nought as a result of his failure to get the needed nominations. He got only one nomination then, from his own division of Gua Musang.

The Cheras division wants the party to amend its constitution to remove the nomination quota system for candidates wanting to contest the top posts.

### **Support for special meeting**

While Syed Ali said that he was not backing Tengku Razaleigh for the top post, he nevertheless agreed with the Kelantan prince that the party should hold an extraordinary

general meeting (EGM).

Tengku Razaleigh has been calling for the EGM to be held on May 11 for the party to look into its failures in the general election.

He said that it was important for the party leadership to hear views of members of the performance of the BN in the general election.

umno 2007 abdullah ahmad badawi 071107The party's annual general assembly - and party polls - is due to be held this June.

However party information chief Muhammad Muhd Taib said yesterday that many divisions had asked Abdullah to defer the party polls and the annual meeting to next year.

According to him, their reasoning for the postponement was to avoid "disaster to the party".

The party leadership is expected to decide on the matter at its meeting tomorrow.

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