

Muar group wants Pak Lah to step down

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MUAR: Eighty Umno branch leaders in the Muar division have urged its leaders to hold an EGM for the division to call for party president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to step down.

The group, which also included those in the division committee, Wanita and Youth wings, gathered at the house of Datuk Kadar Shah Tun Sulaiman to seek his views before making their decision.

The leaders, disappointed when division chairman Datuk Mohd Ismail Mohd Shah lost the Maharani state seat in the recent general election, felt it was time for Umno to be revamped. Spokesman for the group, Zakariah Mahadi, said the party leadership should take responsibility for the polls results and step down. Zakariah, a former Sungai Balang assemblyman, said many Umno members in the division were also sad over the loss of Perak, Kedah, Penang and Selangor to the Opposition.

“We have also decided to give our support to Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah in his bid to revive Umno’s dignity,” he said after the gathering yesterday.

Zakariah said party members in the division were sad that the leadership had failed to notice the political winds of change hitting the country. Meanwhile, Kadar, who is said to have close ties with Tengku Razaleigh, said Abdullah should listen to the grassroots now as many were calling for the president to step down. He said one of the reasons the Malays rejected Barisan was due to the lack of jobs for their children, especially those who had obtained degrees and diplomas.

They were shocked when party leaders told them to take up skill training courses to find jobs. If they wanted to become motor mechanics, electricians, or tailors, for example, they need not have studied hard and applied for educational loans to get diplomas or degrees, he said.

The people were also fed up with corruption, cronyism, nepotism and power abuse, he said.