

Dr M: Musa free to vie for vice-presidency

SEREMBAN, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he does not object to Datuk Musa Hitam contesting the party vice-presidency.

"Anyone is free to contest the vice-presidency as there is no restriction in vying for that post," the party president and prime minister said.

However, he said that such matters were not important at present "as our concentration is on the general election."

Datuk Musa had said in an in-

terview with *Utusan Malaysia* that he would contest the post if he received enough nominations from members.

However, the former deputy prime minister and former deputy Umno president had dismissed any chance of him contesting against Encik Abdul Ghafar Baba for the deputy presidency.

In Johor Baru, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Muhyiddin Mohamed Yassin said Johor Umno accepted Datuk Musa's decision.

"Anyone who wants to

strengthen the party can contest ... Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir has said that any member can contest for the three posts of vice-president," he said.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin, however, said Datuk Musa's statement was "too early" and added that it should not be debated.

"Instead, our attention should be placed on how we can win convincingly in the coming general election," he added.

In Kuala Lumpur, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid

said Datuk Musa was welcome to contest the post.

"I believe Datuk Musa intends to offer his services," he told reporters at the opening of the 57th annual general meeting of the Ex-policemen's Association.

"I feel there is no problem for those wanting to contest and they are welcome to contest," he said.

"This proves that in Umno we practise true democracy. But democracy in Umno must comply with tradition so that unity can be achieved," he added.

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