

Five-year polls ban on those who simply quit

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Members of Parliament and State Assemblymen will be barred from seeking re-election for five years effective from the date of their resignations should the Election (Amendment) Bill become law, the Prime Minister said today.

However, **Datin Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said the political party which fielded the MP or State Assemblyman could still put up another candidate in a by-election.

"The ban is on the individual MP and State Assemblyman and not the party," he said.

However, he added, the excep-

tion to the rule would be MPs and State Assemblymen who were forced to resign.

Dr Mahathir said the ban was necessary to ensure that MPs or State Assemblymen did not ridicule the parliamentary process of electing people's representatives and to avoid wasteful by-elections.

He was replying to questions by newsmen after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting at the Putra World Trade Centre.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department **Datuk Dr Yusof Nor** tabled the Election (Amendment) Bill and the Election (Offences) Bill in the Dewan

Rakyat on Thursday.

The amendment Bill also proposes that MPs who are banned from seeking re-election in a Parliament seat can contest State seats and *vice-versa*.

Dr Mahathir said this flexibility was to allow State Assemblymen to take up Federal postings as was the case of Labour Minister **Datuk Lim Ah Lek** who quit his Teruntum State seat last year to contest in the Bentong parliamentary constituency.

On the Election (Offences) Bill, he said that the amendments were on the conduct of general elections.