

Dr M: Use service record as basis for contesting veep posts

# Umno polls: Dirty tactics to be exposed

By Rahmah Daud

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun** — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today candidates vying for the Umno vice-presidency next month should contest on the strength of their contributions and services to the party.

"The person's record as a member of the party and of the Government should be the basis for them in the contest," he said after launching the National Family Day at the Football Stadium in Bandar Tun Razak (*see also Page 3*).

"As to how many of them want to contest, this is their right," he said.

Dr Mahathir reminded candidates not to resort to unhealthy campaigning.

He said they should avoid giving receptions, money or using Government machinery in campaigns.

It was also wrong for candidates to form pacts as part of their strategies.

"I have heard talk of certain groups forming pacts. I advise members not to support these

people as what they are doing is wrong."

Dr Mahathir said he would not hesitate to expose these people if he found that they had indulged in unhealthy practices.

The Prime Minister said if these candidates won, they would be using similar tactics in the party.

This, he said, was evident in the 1987 general assembly where certain quarters had used money, pressure and obstructed voters.

## Party unity

"If this is how we behave, Umno will be destroyed," he said, adding that unhealthy practices used in the campaign could also result in people hurling slanders which might disrupt party unity.

"They should also avoid using Government officials like those from Kemas or the Information Department to campaign for them.

"These trends were prevalent in the 1987 general assembly," he said.

Meanwhile, Umno deputy president Abdul Ghafar Baba said he would remain neutral in the contest for the vice-presidency.

He made it clear he did not want to be involved in the campaigns by the aspiring candidates.

Opening the annual meetings of the Federal Territory Umno divisions at the KL Hilton here, Encik Ghafar reminded the candidates and their supporters that their campaigns should not create rifts in the party.

He advised delegates to the forthcoming general assembly to cast their votes for their candidates and avoid negative comments which would give rise to ill-feelings.

"What is important is the interest of the Malays and not the candidates' interests," he said, adding Umno could not afford to have its position weakened over fights for posts.

Dr Mahathir had recently said that he would not take sides in the contest.

Among those who had indicated they would contest the vice-presidency are Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib, Malacca Chief Minister Tan Sri Rahim Tamby Chik, Johor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Pahang Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and Foreign Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar.

The vice-presidents, Terengganu Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, Education Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Datuk Abdullah Badawi, are seeking re-election.