

Umno members advised to campaign in clean and

Dr M: Stop poison-pen

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was saddened by the distribution of poison-pen letters in the on-going campaign to the party election in November.

The Prime Minister said he feared that contents in the letters would be used by the Opposition. He added that he had asked that this form of campaigning be stopped.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on the campaigning for party posts in the run-up to the general assembly and election. He had earlier chaired the Umno supreme council meeting at the party headquarters here.

Party vice-president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and supreme council members Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib and Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak have been the target of some of these poison-pen letters.

Dr Mahathir said he was also unhappy that some of the poison-pen letters have taken the form of "flying cartoons". These documents, containing all kinds of allegations aimed at discrediting certain figures contesting seats in the supreme council, have been freely distributed in the current campaign.

He said: "My advice to everyone is to campaign in a clean and healthy manner. In any election, there will be winners and losers. I also hope that everyone will take my advice and that the situation won't be so tense."

Asked to comment on the divisional meetings scheduled to be held at various locations from this month, Dr Mahathir said that they had been generally smooth up to now.

He said there were some incidents where members were trading allegations.

"I fear that such a form of campaigning will adversely affect the image of the party."

Asked what had happened to his advice regarding the contest for the post of deputy president, Dr Mahathir said: "That's history."

He added that the members felt that the party allows democratic practices to be maintained despite his earlier statement that he would prefer that the post was not contested.

He said that some members probably felt that his advice was "undemocratic".

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Asked whether the council discussed the issue surrounding community development (Kemas) officials *vis-a-vis* the Umno election, Dr Mahathir said the matter was not discussed, adding that it was a minor issue.

But council members did discuss names of their representatives to the Youth and Wanita assemblies which will precede the assembly proper.

The two wings will meet on Nov 4 to be followed by the assembly proper the next day for three days.

The council's representatives to the Youth assembly will be Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Pawanteh, Public Enterprises Minister Datuk Dr Yusof Nor and Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Dr Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan.

The council will send Pahang Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Consumer Affairs and Domestic Trade Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar and Deputy Energy,

Telecommunications and Posts Minister Tajol Rosli to the Wanita assembly.

Dr Mahathir said the assembly would be presented with only two resolutions this year — one on the president's speech and the other

on education.

The Perak Umno will present the resolution on the presidential speech, to be seconded by the Youth movement, while Selangor will present the education resolution, which will be

healthy manner
Letters

seconded by the Wanita wing.

He said the supreme council, in its meeting, agreed to maintain its earlier decision that appeals, petitions, grouses from individuals, branches and divisions on

meetings should be referred to the State Umno liaison offices.

He said: "We studied the divisions and branches which had problems and the supreme council has made decisions on them. These de-

isions will be communicated to the respective State liaison offices for implementation."

Dr Mahathir is confident

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PM: Party has beaten crises

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that Umno members are sensible enough not to let the party elections in November split them.

Asked whether the contests for party posts in the coming assembly will split the party, Dr Mahathir said Umno had gone through and survived crises before.

He said as the Umno presidency was not being challenged as yet, this allowed him to see to it that the party remained united even after the party polls.

He also dismissed claims that Umno leaders were too preoccupied with campaigning for the coming party elections that they had neglected their duties.

"Umno leaders have not been neglecting their duties but, as always, have put national matters such as inflation and economic growth close to their hearts.

"Umno is not so preoccupied with this campaign that it has forgotten its responsibilities to the Government," Dr Mahathir said.

Asked about allegations of "outsiders" interfering in Malaysia's internal politics and economic affairs, Dr Mahathir said: "I don't care whether they are from within or outside the country because that's not important."

The Government, he said, could not stop these people (outsiders) from interfering in domestic politics and the economy as they would still continue doing so even if it tried stopping them.

He said the supreme council also congratulated the Pahang Umno, especially Khalil, for the victory in last month's Batu Talam by-election.

The supreme council also discussed the peace efforts by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and Israel. Dr Mahathir said Umno supported the PLO decision to recognise the state of Israel as part of the peace efforts.