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Mahathir-Candidates

I HAVE NO PROXY IN UMNO POLLS, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he is not fielding any proxy in the contest for posts in the Umno elections this October.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said he would not interfere in the elections because all candidates should contest on their own name and ability.

"There is no proxy. Whoever is a candidate has my support," he told reporters after opening Hotel Nikko Kuala Lumpur.

Yesterday, Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat reminded candidates not to use the names of the party president and deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to fish for votes.

Mohamed said Dr Mahathir and Anwar are neutral in the elections.

Dr Mahathir said it is difficult for him to stop any candidate from using his name.

"They will not bother if we try to stop them. So, I think everybody can use it (my name) because I support all of them," he said in jest.

Asked if he had met Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah again, Dr Mahathir said he did not have the opportunity yet because he had just returned from overseas visits.

Early this month, the Prime Minister said he was prepared to meet Tengku Razaleigh's request for another meeting to discuss matters related to the entry of S46 members into Umno after his trip to the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan. He returned home on Saturday. -- BERNAMA

AH YBY