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Mahathir-Candidates

MAHATHIR TELLS UMNO CANDIDATES TO AVOID EARLY CAMPAIGNS

MELAKA, May 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants candidates vying for party posts in the October Umno election to refrain from making press statements or to bring supporters when registering their candidacy.

He said no statement should be made now because ample time would be given for them to campaign.

"There's no need to have press statement for publicity or information...it's sufficient to register only," he told a press conference at the end of his two-day working visit to Melaka today.

The Prime Minister was responding to questions from the press regarding personal attacks which had started among candidates particularly in the contest for party posts in Wanita Umno.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno President, said the party's Supreme Council meeting tomorrow would discuss the matter particularly on guidelines on campaigning for the party election.

He said many candidates might still be in the dark on the matter and made statements to announce their candidacy.

"Registering as a candidate is actually simple...just sign and submit the form...no need to bring supporters," he said.

On Umno's stand on the possibility of cooperating with other political parties in Kelantan following the current political development in the state, the Prime Minister said Umno's stand on the matter was open.

"However, whatever form of action we will take will only be determined after I have met with all Umno leaders in Kelantan tomorrow," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Umno kept an open mind because there were many alternatives available including coalition with another political party or it maintained a neutral stand.

The Prime Minister also announced that Barisan Nasional (BN) would maintain a candidate from the MIC to stand in the by-election for the State Legislative Assembly seat for Bukit Asahan which would be held soon.

The seat fell vacant following the death of its representative, Datuk N. Arunasalam in a road accident in Petaling Jaya last week.

Dr Mahathir said the seat had been allotted to the MIC previously because as a component of the BN, the party must be given a place to contest in.

He said although the Indians were a small community in the area, it was BN policy to allocate seats to all its partners. -- BERNAMA

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