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Umno-Committee

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO ACCUSATIONS AGAINST MT CANDIDATES

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- The Umno Supreme Council (MT) has agreed to set up a special committee to look into accusations against vice-presidential candidates as well as those vying for the posts of youth and wanita chiefs, relating to their campaign activities to the run-up to party election next month.

Party's president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be the chairman of the committee which will also include deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat as members. The three are not contesting in the election.

Several Umno veterans would also be invited to sit on the committee, said Dr Mahathir after chairing the MT meeting at Umno headquarters, Menara Dato' Onn, here tonight.

"The decision of the committee will be final," he said.

There was a need to set up the special committee considering that accusations on alleged breach of the ban on campaigning were being handled by the Disciplinary Committee whose members also included the three vice-presidents as well as youth and wanita chiefs.

The party had banned any forms of campaigning by candidates in a move to overcome money politics and abuses in the run-up to the party's general assembly scheduled from Oct 9 to 12.

Dr Mahathir said the question raised was that while candidates who were not members of the Disciplinary Committee were scrutinised and penalised for accusations made against them, what would be the position of members of the committee who were contesting if there were also accused of campaigning.

He said since it involved Disciplinary Committee members, the MT asked the three vice-presidents Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib as well as youth leader Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik and wanita chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz to leave the meeting while the matter was discussed.

He said MT members who were contesting for the posts of vice-presidents, youth leader and wanita head were also asked to leave the meeting.

"After discussing the matter at length, the MT agrees to set up the special committee," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Disciplinary Committee under the chairmanship of Anwar would continue to assess and make decision on accusations against MT candidates.

The meeting also agreed that all parties concerned including ministers should not hold gatherings for fear of being accused as campaigning.

However, he said certain events which had no possibility of being connected to campaigning could be continued and if could be postponed would be postponed.

Dr Mahathir also warned the delegates not to apply for licences in the run-up to the party election. They could do so later.

The MT believed that the applications for licences were one form of threat to ministers and deputy ministers who were contesting in the party election, he said. -- BERNAMA

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