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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO BANS ALL FORMS OF CAMPAIGNING IN PARTY ELECTIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- The Umno supreme council today decided to ban all forms of campaigning, including those scheduled by the Umno headquarters, in the party elections in October, in a drastic move to curb excessive politicking.

The supreme council also decided that all Umno divisions at their delegates meetings cannot nominate certain candidates but should instead endorse en bloc the nominations of those who have registered to contest.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also Umno president, announced the drastic move after chairing the supreme council meeting which was held before the start of the divisional delegates meetings next Friday.

He said the decision was made to ensure fairness to all the candidates and at same time curb money politics, slandering, threats and excessive politicking which could destroy the party.

With the decision, all candidates for the posts of vice-president, supreme council member and Umno Youth and Wanita committee member must be endorsed by the divisions without any changes, he said. The headquarters would provide all the divisions with the list of candidates on Monday.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat is scheduled to announce the list of candidates tomorrow. Five of the 208 people who had registered to contest had withdrawn -- two for seats on the supreme council and three for seats on Umno Youth committee.

Dr Mahathir explained that the supreme council decision did not contravene the party constitution because it still required at least two divisions to endorse the nomination list.

"The party constitution does not mention the number of candidates that need to be nominated for any post," he said.

He said the decision would be able to curb excessive campaigning for nominations from the divisions as well as competition among the divisions for more nominations for certain candidates.

"Hence, the supreme council will ask all the divisions to support all the seven contenders for the vice-presidency who have been recognised as valid candidates and they (the divisions) need not choose three from the among the seven candidates," Dr Mahathir said.

"Similarly, the divisions must endorse the candidates for supreme council seats and posts of Youth and Wanita heads and committee members," he added.

"This means that there is no need for anyone to nominate anybody. All the divisions are asked to endorse all those nominated as their candidates so that it is in line with the party constitution," he said.

"This move gives equal opportunities to all those offering themselves for the contest," he said.

The supreme council also decided that the posts of president and deputy president be included in the list of candidates although the two posts would not be contested, he added.

Asked whether the ban on campaigning would reduce the chances of those not in the government in airing their vision, Dr Mahathir said: "They must find other ways to one day be in the government".

Although a person did not campaign, he could show his ability at branch, division, state and federal levels, he said.

"Those with talent will have no difficulty becoming leaders," he added.

On whether the ban could lead to secret meetings, Dr Mahathir gave a warning that action would be taken if there was proof of such acts. --
BERNAMA

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