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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO ELECTION CANDIDATES REMINDED AGAIN OF BAN ON CAMPAIGNING

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 29 (Bernama) -- With only 11 more days to the Oct 10 election, Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed today reminded the candidates that all their actions are being watched by the party's special committee.

The committee wanted to ensure that no one breached the ban on campaigning and those who did would suffer the consequences, he told reporters at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah airport in Subang on his return from a 17-day visit to Zimbabwe, Portugal and the United States.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment whether there were cases of Umno election candidates making use of official functions to campaign.

However, he said it was difficult to draw a line as to whether a function attended by a candidate was official or not.

"Sometimes it is difficult to draw a line but it is up to the members to determine whether the official function was purposely or could not be avoided," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was sure that party members and the delegates attending the general assembly "will more or less understand their motives."

Asked whether it was alright for the candidates to attend official functions purposely held, Dr Mahathir said: "It is not alright. If I say it is alright, they might organise official functions. But certain functions are unavoidable."

The Prime Minister recalled how he was criticised by veteran politician Dr Tan Chee Khoon for announcing Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's entry into Umno at an official function in a government office.

"So, it is difficult to talk about politics. You have to leave the room each time. Sometimes it is almost impossible," he said.

Asked on action against Umno leaders present at functions also attended by other candidates, giving the impression that they were endorsing candidates concerned, Dr Mahathir said: "We are also watching them."

Asked to elaborate, Dr Mahathir said: "You will find out in time."

"We are not forming a committee in order to have a picnic. We must do our work. Those who breach the ban on campaigning might feel the effect," he added.

Asked what seem to be the problem for Umno being unable to take action against candidates reported to be breaching the election ethics, he said, "The problem is that we have no solid evidence."

--BERNAMA

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