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Dr M: Rahim eligible to contest Umno elections

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Former Malacca Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik is eligible to contest in the Umno divisional elections as he is not facing any court case.

Umno president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the restriction imposed by the party's supreme council only applied to members who were facing charges.

"Our ban applies to those who have a court case. If they don't, we cannot do anything," he said after visiting the Taman Bunga Raya housing project at Bukit Beruntung, about 70km from here.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on Rahim's nomination for the Kota Melaka divisional head's post which is now held by Datuk Nasir Manap.

Nasir has agreed to step down to make way for Rahim, who was nominated last Thursday by the Ujong Pasir Pantai Umno branch and the Kampung Lapan branch.

Asked further whether Rahim, who had been cleared of corruption charges, should contest, Dr Mahathir replied:

"We have to follow the rule and if a person is found not guilty, we cannot say that 'although he is not guilty, we know he is guilty'".

In jest, he said: "That's why Clinton (United States President Bill Clinton who is alleged to have had a sexual affair with a White House intern) has about 70 per cent (popularity rating) because it is yet to be determined if he is guilty or innocent."

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