

18/02/1998

Dr M warns members: No violence during polls

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Umno members today received another round of reminders and warnings to ensure incident-free elections at the branches and divisions.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said action would be taken against those resorting to violence during the elections.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Prime Minister said anyone who was eligible and had not committed any offence could contest party posts, but those unhappy with the candidacy should not resort to violence.

He was commenting on Sunday's incidents at Malacca's Permatang Pasir and Permatang Pasir Tengah branch meetings.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Rahim Noor, commenting on the same subject in Kuantan, urged Umno members to exercise restraint, and to avoid any incident that would require the presence of police.

Speaking to reporters at the State Police headquarters, he said as far as possible, police would not interfere in the proceedings at Umno branches and divisional elections, being affairs of a political party.

"We will avoid deploying our men at meeting venues or supervising the proceedings.

"But Umno members must make sure there is no disturbance," he said.

Branch elections started on Feb 12 and end on March 15, while elections at the divisional level will be from March 12 to 29.

Also in Kuantan, Anti Corruption Agency deputy director-general (operations) Datuk Mohd Zawawi Mohd Nordin said the ACA would check on any reports on the use of money in the elections.

However, he said so far, the ACA has not received any complaints of members involved in money politics.

He was speaking to reporters after a briefing on the Anti Corruption Act 1997 by Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob.

On the elections, Khalil said Umno's elected representatives should not announce any allocation to their constituents until after the divisional elections.

"They should not expose themselves to allegations of vote-buying," he said, adding that the Supreme Council had made this clear.

In Bota, Perak Umno chief Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib said the liaison committee would meet all 23 division secretaries and information chiefs tomorrow for the latest update on the elections.

Speaking to newsmen after launching the State-level campaign to boost food production, Ramli said there had not been any problems since the branch meetings started on Feb 12.

He expressed the hope that this situation would prevail throughout the branch and divisional elections.

In Seremban, Negri Sembilan Umno liaison committee chief Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad said a management committee chaired by State Umno treasurer Datuk Mokhtar Hashim has been formed.

The committee will monitor any violation of party rules in relation to the branch and divisional elections.

The committee would gather reports filed by party members, branches and divisions to be submitted to the liaison committee which would in turn hand them over to the Umno disciplinary committee.

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