

20 DEC 1999

Tajol-Umno

ACCEPT PROFESSIONALS AS UMNO CANDIDATES, SAYS TAJOL

IPOH, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali said today he supported the call for Umno to field professionals as candidates in general elections even if they do not hold posts in the party.

He said the government found it hard to get professionals with expertise in certain fields to venture into active politics through Umno as they do not hold important party posts at the branch or divisional level.

"When the times comes to appoint members of the Cabinet or State Executive Councils, we are in a difficult situation.

"Sometimes we need the expertise of certain people but they are not given the opportunity to contest in the polls," he said after the oath-taking ceremony for members of the Perak State Legislative Assembly.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar had proposed last week that Umno allow professionals and academicians to stand as candidates in general elections without placing much importance on their position in the party hierarchy.

Yesterday, Umno president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Umno Supreme Council had agreed to study the proposal.

Tajol Rosli said Umno would not woo all professionals but only those needed by the party.

He pointed out that Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob was previously a diplomat, and former Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik a government officer.

Similarly, MCA secretary-general Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh and Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn were academicians before becoming politicians, he said.

-- BERNAMA

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