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Backing efforts to curb money politics

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - Umno will support measures taken by State leaders to ensure delegates to the party's general assembly next month are not exposed to money politics.

Saying this today, party vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said whatever steps which could help eradicate money politics would be welcomed.

"It will also be good if members are given the explanation behind the no-campaign pledge," he said, alluding to the agreement reached among 15 candidates bidding for senior posts in the elections.

The 15 are vying for the posts of vice-presidents, Wanita chief, deputy Wanita chief and deputy Youth chief.

Anyone found breaching the pledge, signed before Umno president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last Monday, would have his or her misconduct exposed during the general assembly starting May 11.

Abdullah, who is assuming the duties of deputy president, was asked to comment on the move by Kedah Umno to impose some form of control on the movement of delegates attending the general assembly to reduce the chances of their getting involved in money politics.

The Deputy Prime Minister had earlier chaired the third meeting of the Strategic Thrusts Implementation Committee of the National Information Technology Council here.

On dinners hosted for delegates at the assembly, Abdullah said such a practice would not be allowed.

Abdullah was also asked to comment on the move by Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib, one of the candidates for the vice-presidency, who had put up a banner in front of his house informing delegates not to come and see him.

"I don't really have much to comment but perhaps this is done because he could not meet the hundreds of people wanting to see him ... it is one way of conveying an apology."

When pointed out that Muhammad's action could be regarded as a subtle way of campaigning as he had received coverage in the Press because of it, Abdullah said: "It is for you to interpret."

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