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Honour pledge not to campaign, says Pak Lah

CANDIDATES vying for top posts in Umno should honour their pledge not to campaign although they are allowed to do so in the run-up to the party's elections beginning May 11, says the party's deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Since they have already signed the declaration and made the pledge not to campaign to eradicate money politics, they must honour their promises.

"Furthermore, they need no introduction to Umno members as most of them are familiar faces," he told newsmen after launching the four-day Water 2000, Tenaga 2000 and International Security, Safe and Fire Protection exhibition and conference simultaneously in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Abdullah, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, was asked to clarify Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's remarks that candidates can campaign as a run-up to the elections.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, gave the nod for candidates to campaign during his meeting with 59 of the 63 candidates vying for the party's 25 supreme council seats last Friday.

On Monday, all 15 candidates vying for the posts of vice-president, Wanita chief and deputy chief, and deputy Youth chief signed a declaration, pledging not to indulge in any form of campaigning.

The candidates for these posts also pledged to cease any form of contact with the delegates to prevent suspicion and money politics.

During his meeting with the candidates for the Umno supreme council, he said the candidates did not sign any declaration but made a verbal declaration not to campaign.

However, at least six candidates were said to have requested for some form of campaigning to introduce themselves to members, to which the Prime Minister said they were allowed to campaign but not excessively.

Abdullah reminded candidates, especially those who are new and unfamiliar to other members, that although they are allowed to campaign, they must not go overboard and indulge in money politics.

"Our advice is clear that they should not involve in money politics during campaigning. It must be a healthy campaign," he said.

Asked whether Umno has produced guidelines for candidates to campaign, Abdullah said they should adhere to Umno's code of ethics.

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