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PM: I'm still getting reports on money politics in Umno

Kamarul Yunus

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday said he is still receiving reports on money being given to Umno delegates attending the party's general assembly beginning on Thursday.

The Prime Minister, who is also Umno president, said he is investigating the reports, which came from outside Kuala Lumpur.

"I am checking on them. If there is prove to back the allegations, I will definitely reveal them directly or indirectly," he told newsmen after attending the Kuala Lumpur Thomas/Uber Cup Run 2000 in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir was asked whether he was satisfied with the minimum campaigning by candidates vying for the party's Supreme Council seats in this week's Umno elections.

Up for grabs are the deputy permanent chairman post, three vice-presidencies, 25 Supreme Council seats, Youth and Wanita heads and vice-heads as well as committee members of the two movements.

Asked whether investigations will be completed before the assembly, Dr Mahathir said he has to "see what to do first".

Pressed again on what will happen to candidates who win through money politics, Dr Mahathir said if there is proof, the Supreme Council will consider the type of punishment that can be taken against them.

On his reminder to delegates hanging around Kuala Lumpur to go back to their home states and return tomorrow to avoid suspicion, Dr Mahathir noted that the majority of them have heeded his advice.

"I think there is some effect. I don't know whether it is 100 per cent, but Kuala Lumpur is certainly a little bit quieter now. The majority (of the delegates) have gone home," he said.

He added that those who did not heed his advice would have "a short future in Umno".

"If they don't go back to their respective states, we will know what kind of persons they are. If we can identify them, they will find that their career in Umno is limited," he said.

On the use of "poison-pen" letters during the run-up to the elections, Dr Mahathir said such acts, including distributing lies and wild accusations through the Internet, are the work of the cowards and useless people.

"This is an old practice by cowards who are not brave enough to face criticisms from others ... all negative traits are found on people issuing anonymous letters and posting messages on the Internet. They are useless people," he said.

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