

19/04/2000

Razaleigh to determine whether division should file appeal

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, who failed to win a ticket to contest the post of Umno vice-president following the supreme council's rejection of the Gua Musang division's nominations, will determine whether it should appeal against the decision.

Tengku Razaleigh, who is the division's chairman, said he believed many of the members would want to know why their nominations, made through the divisional committee, were thrown out.

"However, we are aware the supreme council has the authority to interpret any (party) rule," Tengku Razaleigh said in a statement issued here today.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said yesterday the rejection was based on the fact that the nominations were made, not by the delegates, but the divisional committee.

With the rejection, Tengku Razaleigh was left with 16 nominations, just one short to qualify to contest one of the three posts of vice-presidents.

In his statement, Tengku Razaleigh said he was sensitive to the supreme council's stand (on the validity of Gua Musang's nominations) that it was acting as a referee of a match in which its decision must be accepted.

"If that is the case, it makes the refereeing very interesting in which the players are also the referee and as such, the decision can surely be expected." Tengku Razaleigh, who is Kelantan Umno chief, said he was certain that during next month's Umno general assembly, delegates would exercise their power wisely in choosing the new line-up of leadership.

"For the top two posts (president and deputy president), their choice is obvious as contest has been disallowed though the party constitution and regulations permit it.

"For all party posts, I believe the delegates know best who is more qualified," he added.

Tengku Razaleigh said the decision on the eligibility to contest should not merely be based on nominations "which is a new requirement".

He said consideration should be given to those capable to be leaders who had integrity, were free of corruption, abuse of power and all forms of scandals, allegations and slanders which can bring shame to Umno, the Malay race and the country as a whole.

Tengku Razaleigh said he hoped the elections to the Umno leadership would strengthen Malay unity and restore the confidence of the Malays in the party.

Gua Musang deputy division chief Saupi Deraman said the division would leave it to Tengku Razaleigh to decide on the next course of action on the rejection.

He, however, made it clear that he would abide by the supreme council's decision on the matter.

"We leave it to Tengku Razaleigh on whether there should be a need to call for a divisional meeting. It is all up to him to determine whether to appeal against the decision or not."

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