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Supreme Council aspirants agree on no campaign rule

PUTRAJAYA, Fri. - All candidates for the Umno supreme council posts today unanimously agreed to stop all forms of campaigning for the Umno election on May 11 in an effort to eradicate money politics.

They came to the agreement after a closed door, three-hour meeting with party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Prime Minister's official residence, Seri Perdana, here tonight.

Only four of the 63 candidates vying for the 25 posts did not attend the meeting. It was understood they had valid reasons for being absent.

"The president advised the candidates to steer clear of all forms of campaigning which was not healthy, especially using money to garner support," said Perlis Menteri Besar Tan Sri Shahidan Kassim, who is also a candidate for supreme council.

When asked if they had signed a pledge, as done by the 15 candidates who are vying for the senior posts, Shahidan said they did not. "It was a unanimous verbal agreement."

The 15 candidates vying for the three vice presidents, wanita chief, deputy wanita chief and deputy Umno youth chief posts signed a pledge on Monday to stop campaigning to eradicate money politics.

Another candidate Datuk Abdul Azim Ahmad Zabidi, who is also Bank Simpanan Nasional chairman, said at least six candidates had requested for some form of campaigning to at least introduce themselves.

He said Dr Mahathir said it was up to the candidates to interpret the no-campaigning advice.

"The president advised us to safeguard Umno's image and the party's future.

"He also advised delegates to reject candidates who practised money politics. His stand on this was clear," he said.

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