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Tajol Rosli advises those contesting not to form groups

IPOH, Wed. - State Umno chief Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali today called on Umno members vying for positions in the May party election to refrain from forming teams to avoid a split in the party.

He said contesting as groups could lead to a repeat of the 1987 incident where Umno was declared unlawful and a splinter party, Parti Melayu Semangat 46, was formed.

"Contesting as teams will result in factions and it will be difficult to unite them after the election.

"If you want to contest, go ahead, but do not form teams or contest as groups," he said after the State Executive Council meeting.

Tajol Rosli, who is Menteri Besar, also advised members to heed the supreme council's no-contest advice for the two top posts and the proposed code of ethics for candidates as these could help strengthen the party.

Tajol Rosli said this in response to party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that guidelines on party election were meant to curb unhealthy practices and not intended to stop anyone from contesting.

Dr Mahathir also said such practices and intense campaigning could cause a split in the party and that this was the reason behind the no-contest advice.

In Johor Baru, State Umno chief Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said today contesting for other than the Umno president's and deputy president's posts in the May election would not cause internal split.

The Menteri Besar said experience had proven that it was fine to contest for the seats of vice-presidents, Wanita and Youth chiefs and the supreme council.

"It is contesting for the top two posts that can cause a split," he said after chairing the State Executive Council meeting.

In Kuantan, Pahang Umno chief and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said nobody could guarantee that there would be no split in the party should there be contests for the top two posts.

Adnan was speaking after attending Lembaga Kemajuan Perusahaan Pertanian's Hari Raya open house.

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