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Umno council rejects all Gua Musang's nominations

Kamarul Yunus

UMNO stalwart Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's bid to contest one of the three vice presidents' post was dashed yesterday when the party's supreme council rejected all nominations by the Gua Musang divisional committee.

The council rejected the nominations by the divisional committee last Friday as it had not adhered to the council's instructions on nominations by the Umno divisions.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also Umno president, said although the Gua Musang delegates had given the divisional committee the power to nominate, the supreme council concluded that it did not adhere to its instructions.

"We have given instructions that nominations must be decided by the delegates. The supreme council requires all divisions to make the decision at the delegates' meeting, and not to leave them to the committee.

"As such, the council believes that Gua Musang division's to let the committee decide on the nominations was against the supreme council's directives," he said.

If the nomination from Gua Musang divisional committee on the vice president's post was included, Razaleigh has 17 nominations - a minimum needed for him to contest for the post. However, with the supreme council's decision yesterday, this has ruled him out from contesting.

Dr Mahathir denied that the supreme council's decision was an attempt to prevent Razaleigh from contesting the vice president's post, saying the rules and guidelines are clear and all divisions have been informed about them before they held their divisional meetings early March. There are 165 Umno divisions.

On whether Razaleigh can appeal, Dr Mahathir said he can but the decision by the supreme council is final.

"Like a referee in a soccer match, his decision will be final," he said.

Dr Mahathir also reminded delegates to the Umno general assembly, scheduled for May 11-13 not to indulge in money politics, saying that those involved are not fit to be the party's leaders.

"I will speak on this in my opening address at the general assembly next month," he said.

He said the Umno head office will set up a special unit to monitor the registration of Umno and electoral voters.

"This is to create a close rapport between the electoral voters and Umno," he said.

Dr Mahathir also thanked the people for not participating in an illegal gathering said to be organised by some of the supporters of Parti Keadilan Nasional (Keadilan) last Saturday.

"While it is the duty of the Government to ensure peace and order so that the people can conduct their daily chores, the public too should not be involved in such illegal activities that could result in losses to themselves and the nation in terms of attracting tourists and investors to come to the country," he said.

He also attributed the failure of the illegal gathering to the reluctance of some Keadilan supporters to participate, especially its members of Parliament and State Assemblymen.

The supreme council also extended its deepest condolences to the family of the late Raja of Perlis Tuanku Syed Putra Syed Hassan Jamalullail who passed away at Institut Jantung Negara in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday.

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