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Youth wing welcomes 'no to money politics' pledge

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Umno Youth welcomes the pledge by the 15 candidates bidding for senior posts in the May party election not to be involved in money politics.

Umno Youth acting head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said today the pledge showed that the candidates were united in efforts to strengthen the party.

"I believe the stand was taken as a move to ensure party unity and to ensure it would be a 'family affair' contest.

"I urge all candidates and delegates to strictly follow the agreement and not get involved in unhealthy activities," said Hishammuddin, who is also Youth and Sports Minister.

Also present were the movement's secretary Zulkifli Alwi and candidates for the Umno Youth deputy head's post Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir and Zein Isma Ismail.

Hishammuddin was commenting on a statement by Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday that all 15 candidates for the top posts had signed a pledge to contest in a healthy manner.

The 15 are candidates for the posts of vice-presidents, Wanita chief, deputy Wanita chief and deputy Youth chief.

Hishammuddin, who has unofficially won the Youth head's post unopposed, also urged delegates not to see other candidates.

"If they want more information on the candidates, they can contact the party headquarters and we can provide them with all the necessary details."

Asked whether he would advise any candidate to seek a compromise in order to avoid a contest, Hishammuddin said it was not for him to decide what others should or should not do.

"I believe that the contest would not affect the movement's image. What is important is that all candidates and delegates follow the regulations."

In Ipoh, State Umno chief Datuk Seri Diraja Tajol Rosli Ghazali said the written pledge was a good move to prevent money politics.

The Menteri Besar said although candidates were well aware of the need to refrain from indulging in such matters, the move could effectively stop any attempt to do so.

Tajol Rosli said that candidates contesting for the supreme council seats were also expected to make a similar pledge during a meeting with Dr Mahathir on Friday.

In line with Dr Mahathir's decision to postpone all State-level party conventions until after the general assembly, he said the meeting of Perak delegates scheduled for Saturday had been cancelled.

The meeting to be held here was to discuss and make preparations for the general assembly next month.

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