

Jelutong Umno man claims chairman abused power

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PENANG: A Jelutong Umno member has lodged a report with the party's disciplinary board, alleging power abuse by the division's chairman Datuk Abdul Rashid Ismail.

Yahaya Omar said he faxed a letter on Friday to board chairman Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen on an alleged attempt by Rashid to stop him (Yahaya) from contesting the division chairman's post.

"I had received the minimum eight nominations needed to contest for the division chief post by March 31 and my membership in the

party has exceeded the required three years to contest.

"Therefore, I have fulfilled all criteria to contest," he told *The Star*.

Yahaya alleged that Rashid declared the AGMs of those branches that nominated him as invalid.

He refuted charges by Rashid on Friday that "trouble-makers who had taken orders from certain quarters" had disrupted the branch meetings.

Rashid had also said that a report was being compiled for party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Yahaya said he had earlier informed an Umno Supreme Council member on the matter and was advised to report his allegation to the disciplinary board for further action.

He also claimed about 60% of the 8,000 to 10,000 members in the Jelutong division had voiced dissatisfaction over Rashid's "non-performance" as division chief for the past 11 years.

Yahaya, who is a businessman, said this was the first time he made an attempt to contest for the post although he had been a member of the division for the past 23 years.

Rashid could not be reached for comment.