

'Rich have no business holding Umno posts'

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Party leaders should not get govt contracts, says Mahathir

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ALOR STAR, Sat: Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad proposes barring party members who are rich from holding positions in the party.

He said he will also propose that those holding party positions be denied government contracts.

He said he will discuss with the party supreme council members on adding new regulations on the matter aimed at ridding the party of money politics.

Speaking to reporters during a break at the Kubang Pasu division's delegates' meeting at Jitra near here today, Mahathir, who is also the Prime Minister said: "This is my proposal. We will study how we can stop those with money from becoming a leader or nominated for party positions since we know that they like to use their money to manipulate the delegates in the party.

"If such action (using money to get position in the party) cannot be curbed, then it will become a culture among the Malays and in future, these Malays are easy to control, since they can be bought for their decisions.

"If we do not prevent it from now, these Malays who are willing to sell their dignity will also be willing to sell their people for a price," he said.

Mahathir said he is making the proposals since he feels that there are those who come into Umno with the intention to obtain monetary

benefits.

"These people think when they join Umno, they will get special privileges. I hope this will stop.

"It is better to give the contracts to those who are not in the party," he said.

Mahathir said if the proposals are approved, existing leaders in the party are also affected.

Asked on the expected

reactions of Umno members on the proposals, Mahathir said some of them might oppose the idea and some may even threaten to join the opposition.

"This we will have to accept," he said.

On money politics, Mahathir said so far the committee led by Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen has received numerous com-

plaints and the committee will report to the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) if there are cases which needed the agency's attention.

Mahathir said the money politics problem is not rampant as there were no contest in some party divisions because the incumbents stepped down or members retained the incumbents.