

# Umno leaders back move to separate money and politics

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**PETALING JAYA, Sun:** Umno leaders have come out to support the proposal to bar the rich from holding positions in the party.

However, they feel the party must obtain feedback from the members before finalising the move.

Yesterday, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad suggested barring members who are rich from holding post in the party.

He also proposed that those holding party positions be denied government contracts and this will be discussed with Umno supreme council members aimed at ridding the party of money politics.

Commenting on this, party vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said there must be a definition for "rich" to avoid complication or confusion among party members.

Speaking to reporters after opening the Subang Umno division meeting here, Najib said: "I believe the party president's proposal was based on his worry that money politics in the party has become rampant as this will affect Umno's

credibility and image."

Money politics, he said, will also prevent the entry of capable leaders who have the talent to lead in the party.

Najib said party posts at the national, state, branch and division levels should be contested but limited to those who are committed and willing to work for the party.

In **KLANG**, Umno information chief Datuk Mustapa Mohamed is confident that party leaders and members will support the proposal.

"If wealth is used as a yardstick to hold party positions, then they will forget the need for providing service to people," he said after opening the Umno Klang division delegates meeting.

Mustapa said the criteria to screen the wealthy needs careful study as it should not result in denying one the opportunity to establish a genuine career in politics.

In **MALACCA**, state Umno chief Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam said the proposal as timely, as will open discussions among members on the issue of money politics, which has the potential to weaken the party in the long run.

"Umno will surely be weakened if a rich person, with all the comforts of life, decides to join the party and stand for contest," he said.