

# No name-dropping, says Mahathir

STAR

70 MAR 2001

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KUALA LUMPUR: Candidates vying for posts in the upcoming Umno division elections have been warned not to use the names of leaders or claim their candidacy had been endorsed by the leadership.

Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the party headquarters had received reports that some candidates were claiming they had been endorsed by him.

"Some are also claiming that they have been endorsed by me while some are claiming that their endorsement comes from me through 'Mama' or my wife (Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali).

"Let's be warned that no one should make such claims, or say they have been endorsed by (Umno deputy president) Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi," he told reporters after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting yesterday.

day.

Dr Mahathir said there had also been unsubstantiated reports about money politics and other negative activities.

However, he said, based on the feedback received so far, it was believed that the problem was not as bad as it was several years ago.

All these cases, he said, were being investigated and disciplinary action would be taken against those found guilty.

He also said candidates who wanted to contest for posts would have to do so based on their own merit and must not misuse their government positions to garner support.

On the proposed Malay unity talks with PAS, Dr Mahathir reiterated that he was very serious in wanting to meet the opposition leaders any time, any place and any day.

"We don't have any ulterior motives except to discuss is-

sues involving Malay interests.

"There is nothing political in our agenda, but if PAS wants to bring up other issues, we can still discuss them," he added.

He also said that PAS leaders should not try to get political mileage from Umno's seriousness in wanting to address Malay unity problems by twisting the facts to make other races uneasy.

He said some PAS and Parti Keadilan Nasional leaders had

made statements through *Harakah* online that Umno was trying to get the Malays to cooperate so that they could kill the Chinese.

The council yesterday also agreed to increase the age limit for Puteri Umno's leaders from 35 to 40.

Wanita Umno head Datin Seri Rafidah Aziz said the decision was made following difficulties in finding suitable leaders to head the new wing's protest committee.