

07/05/2001

ACA may be called in (HL)

Patrick Sennyah

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The names of the six party officials who were found guilty of indulging in money politics by the party's disciplinary board yesterday will be handed to the Anti-Corruption Agency, if necessary.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the party was very serious in combating money politics although many might feel frustrated that they could "no longer move up in Umno".

"We cannot dismiss the decision by the party's disciplinary board as we could lose our credibility.

"If the board makes any recommendation, the supreme council will endorse it," he said after officially opening the "Dinosaurs Alive" exhibition at the Summit USJ today.

He said although the stern disciplinary action may lessen the party's support from certain quarters, he was confident that others who wanted to see a clean Umno would support it.

"This (money politics) must be ended immediately.

"We want to ensure our country is ruled by parties which are free from money politics," he added.

Yesterday, the disciplinary board, in its first decision since the conclusion of the divisional elections last month, announced the suspension of the six Umno officials.

The six are:

- * Gopeng division chief Mustafa Kamal Mohd Nawil;
- * Bagan Serai candidate for deputy chief Zaki Din;
- * Baling division chief and State Exco member Datuk Zainol Md Isa;
- * Gopeng information chief Mohamad Annuar Baharuddin;
- * Selayang information chief Rahmat Abdullah; and,
- * Muar division chief and KFC Holdings (M) Bhd executive deputy chairman Datuk Abdullah Omar.

Except for Zaki, the other five are barred from standing for elections for six years.

Zaki is barred from contesting any party post at the branch, division and supreme council levels for two party elections.

The six are not allowed to be appointed to any party post and will lose the right to vote in party elections at all levels for six years.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Prime Minister, said when the supreme council endorsed the board's decision, the six would lose their present positions in the party.

Asked if Zainol would lose his State Exco position, he said the findings of the disciplinary board concerned the party only and it would not interfere with any other matters.

"That is the duty of others and we will leave it to them to decide," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said Umno has yet to decide whether there would be a re-election to fill the three divisional chief posts or appoint the deputy to assume the position.

On the board's report on its investigations into Kuantan Umno chief Datuk Fauzi Abdul Rahman's allegations of money politics, he said would have to look at the report first.

"Once we get the report, we will consider what action should be taken," he said.

Yesterday, the board's chairman Tengku Ahmad Rithaudeen Tengku Ismail

said that the completed report would be handed over to the Umno supreme council tomorrow.

Meanwhile, in Selangor, Umno deputy chief Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo said the suspension showed that Umno was a no-nonsense party and did not tolerate such practices.

"To clean up our image, we have to win back the confidence of some members who had left the party," he said.

He said although only a handful of members resorted to money politics to gain positions, it had to be stopped immediately before it got out of hand.