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Dr M: No special treatment for winners in Umno polls

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Umno members who have been elected in the recent party divisional elections will not be accorded any special treatment, even by the Government.

Dr Mahathir, who is also party president, said he will not entertain any request for favours from these individuals.

"Umno was established to struggle for the destiny of the Malays and not for any particular individual," he said at a meeting organised by Umno Youth in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Attacking money politics and corruption practised by some party members, Dr Mahathir said any form of corruption among party members is not acceptable and should be totally rejected.

"The young generation of Umno members should reject the corrupt practice of some of their elders.

"If money is used to buy influence in party elections then we will inevitably fall to its influence," he said.

The Prime Minister made reference to the recent decision by the party's supreme council to uphold the nullification of the election results of six Umno members, including three division heads, by the party's disciplinary board.

"If we buy votes in a party election eventually we will not hesitate to buy votes in the general election and ultimately we will not be ashamed to sell our dignity.

"That is why action was taken because they (the six members) portrayed a negative culture.

"It may be seen as harsh but the effects of such actions to the Malays in the future will be much worse," he said.

Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, secretary general Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaacob and Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein were present at the meeting.

Dr Mahathir threw a challenge to Youth members to take up what he called a practical test to gauge the commitment and determination of party members. This includes efforts to increase membership by way of a member-get-member approach.

Dr Mahathir said each Youth member should strive to rope in five new members.

Two other tasks outlined by the Prime Minister are ensuring all eligible party members register as voters and setting up operation rooms at each branch.

"I will be making my rounds to all the divisions and in my visit I want to see the list of new members, new voters and the operation rooms. I am keen to see which branch comes out tops.

"This may not be a romantic thing to do but it will prove our commitment to party work," he said.

Dr Mahathir also advised Youth leaders not to distance themselves from society.

"When you go down to the villages don't use your luxury cars. Leave them at home. We must set a good example," he said.

Hishammuddin said all Youth activities in future will have the element of election in mind. "We have to get organised in terms of our machinery and ensure that any instruction from the party leadership is conveyed to the grassroots level."

He added that the movement hopes to increase the present membership of 850,000 to a million by the next general election.

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