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`Wealthy members need not contest'

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Wealthy people can join Umno but they need not contest posts, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said they can become ordinary members and need not opt for division head posts.

"We will determine the ways, so that those who are sincere in wanting to contest are not blocked from doing so merely because they are rich," he said today.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Prime Minister, was asked to clarify his statement that the "super-rich" members should not contest for posts.

After opening the Kubang Pasu Umno division meeting on Saturday, Dr Mahathir said those aspiring to contest in future party election have to declare their assets.

He said these were among the proposals to be forwarded to the party's supreme council in an effort to curb money politics.

Asked today whether this applied to anyone in particular, Dr Mahathir said it did not.

"They (the aspirants) must make statutory declarations of their wealth, as the Ministers are doing at present.

"But this is only my view, it is not yet agreed by the supreme council."

When pointed out that many Ministers were rich, Dr Mahathir said that although it was so, Ministers were required to declare their wealth.

"If they contest for positions and their wealth suddenly dissipates, we want to know why," he said.

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