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Mahathir-Umno

SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS SHOWS UMNO'S SERIOUSNESS IN CURBING MONEY POLITICS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 6 (Bernama) -- The decision made by the Umno Disciplinary Board to suspend six Umno members from holding office for six years shows that the party is serious in wiping out money politics, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

"We hope others who wished to see a clean Umno will give their support to Umno, he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno President, said Umno took this serious approach to overcome the problem of money politics within the party.

"Although there are many who are frustrated that they cannot move up in Umno, this kind of practice must be curbed quickly although it would result in less support for the party," he added.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters after opening the "Dinosaurs Alive" exhibition here. Also present was his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

He was commenting on the decision made by the Umno Disciplinary Board yesterday to suspend six Umno members, including three division chiefs for being involved in money politics in the party's recent division elections.

Those suspended of their right to contest are Gopeng division chief, Mustafa Kamal Mohd Nawi; Gopeng division information chief, Mohamad Annuar Baharuddin; Bagan Serai division deputy chief contestant, Zaki Din; Baling division chief, Datuk Zainol Mohd Isa, Selayang division information chief, Rahmat Abdullah; and Muar division chief, Datuk Abdullah Omar.

Chairman of the disciplinary board Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen announced yesterday that the Umno members' right to contest, hold positions and to vote had been suspended for six years for breach of party discipline.

Dr Mahathir said, the decision of the board would receive the support of the Umno Supreme Council as any move to disregard it would result in the party losing its credibility.

Asked if elections would be held again in those affected divisions, he said this had not been decided yet.

The Umno President was also asked if the exco position held by Zainol would be affected as well, he said the decision only related to party matters.

"This only involves the party, we will not get involved in other matters, that is the duty of others," he added.

When asked if Umno would hand over cases of money politics to the Anti Corruption Agency, Dr Mahathir said, "Yes, if there is a need to do so, we will hand over."

On Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen's statement that the disciplinary board had concluded its investigations on the allegation of money politics made by Kuantan Division Chief Datuk Fauzi Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister said he was yet to receive the report on the outcome of the investigation.

"We do not know what is in the report, we will deliberate on the report once we have received it," he added.

A special committee, chaired by Tan Sri Zaki Tun Azmi was formed to investigate Fauzi's allegation that money politics was used in the contest for the post of Beserah Umno Division Chief last March.

Fauzi also lodged a police report claiming that former Pahang Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, who is Umno Secretary-General and Information Minister, had deviated in giving out timber concessions.

-- BERNAMA

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