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Gerakan-Withdrawal

PARTY UNITY REASON FOR WITHDRAWALS IN GERAKAN ELECTIONS, SAYS KENG YAIK

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 2 (Bernama) -- Putting the party's interest above self was the reason for the spate of withdrawals from the Gerakan elections, to be held on Friday and Saturday, party president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

"This (party unity and spirit) is the strength of Gerakan. Positions are not important...we have been avoiding contest for some years now but sometimes contest is unavoidable," he said.

He said this when asked to comment on the spate of withdrawals from elections for the party's central, Wanita and Youth posts this weekend. The Wanita and Youth elections will be held on Friday and the elections for the party central leadership on Saturday.

When nominations for the central posts were opened two weeks ago, 28 aspirants were vying for the 18 positions in the Gerakan Central Working Committee (CWC) but as of yesterday eight had withdrawn.

"After consultation by our leaders with the aspirants, some have opted to pull out for the sake of party unity...after consultation among themselves some will pull out.

"As far as I know, there are now eight withdrawals, leaving 20 candidates (18 incumbents and two others) contesting for 18 positions. The two are individual members who are known only at branch level," Lim told Bernama in an interview yesterday.

However, he said, the state leaders would talk to the two remaining candidates and they too may "just end up withdrawing and we could see a no contest".

He said the spirit shown by aspiring candidates in the Central Working Committee by not fighting for positions augured well for the party as it showed that the members had the interest of the party at heart.

"Some people call it the president's men, but it is not so. I must admit that of the eight withdrawals I spoke to only one," Lim said.

He said those who put in their nominations did so due to dissatisfaction with state Gerakan leaders.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Youth Council described the treatment of Dr Mahathir and Abdullah by the U.S. officers as "overzealous and absolute disrespect for the feelings of the people of this country".

Council vice-president Sobri Ahmad said such stringent checks on Malaysian leaders in the name of security was unacceptable.

"These actions give the impression that the United States is scared of its own shadows," he said in a statement.

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