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Khalil-Education

EDUCATION ISSUES OPPOSITION'S FOCUS IN POLLS, SAYS KHALIL

BANGI, May 25 (Bernama) -- Education issues will be used widely by the opposition to galvanise the people's support in the coming general election, Umno Secretary-General Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said today.

He said it was because education was a vast area covering primary, secondary and religious schools, the opposition would harp on the issues to win over the people's hearts and minds to back their candidates.

Hence, Umno members must equip themselves with facts and figures to explain the issues raised by the opposition, he said when opening the Umno Education Convention 2003 at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

The three-day convention beginning Friday provided valuable inputs to Umno members to mobilise the party's election machinery for the general election, said Khalil, who is also Information Minister.

Besides education, he said, PAS would continue to play up the casino licence issue at the Bukit Tinggi holiday resort in Bentong, Pahang despite the government's denial of the party's allegation that the government had given approval to operate a casino at the resort.

"Opposition parties have made education issues as their No 2 issue in their election campaign after the casino issue.

"I read the Harakah newspaper (PAS' official organ), two-thirds of its contents are on the casino issue," he said.

On Tuesday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad denied PAS' allegation that the government had approved a casino licence to the operator of the Bukit Tinggi Holiday Resort.

The Prime Minister said the licence was for slot machines for the exclusive use of club members only.

Commenting on Dr Mahathir's statement that elected representatives who failed to discharge their duties after winning in the election would not be renominated in the coming general election, Khalil said every Umno elected representative was required to send a report on the activities carried out in their respective constituencies to the supreme council.

"Umno Members of Parliament and Assemblymen have been asked to submit reports to the party headquarters and we cross-check their reports with the actual situations in the constituencies," he said.

The convention, being held for the first time, was opened by Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, who is also Umno Education Bureau chief.

It was aimed at explaining government policies and current issues in education.

-- BERNAMA

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