

01 FEB 2003

Tajol-Candidate

HIGH-CALIBER 'OUTSIDER' CANDIDATES OK, SAYS TAJOL ROSLI

IPOH, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- Umno Perak sees nothing wrong in fielding candidates from outside the election constituency on condition they have great potential, high caliber and were better than any local candidate.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali, however, said priority would be given to locals who showed commitment in fighting for the party's cause.

The choice of non-local candidates was not new. For example, Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz was the Kuala Kangsar member of parliament while Datuk Dr Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan was the Bukit Gantang MP.

"They were accepted because of their position in the government and their caliber," he told reporters after attending the Chinese New Year open house organised by Infrastructure and Public Amenities Committee chairman Datuk Ong Ka Chuan here today.

Tajol Rosli was commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday on the complications of fielding non-local candidates due to state or district loyalty.

Dr Mahathir was reported to have said that non-local candidates did not meet the 'flavour' of locals in the constituency .

"But if we want to merely field a candidate without considering his speciality, we might as well field local candidates who had worked hard to strengthened the party," Tajol Rosli said.

He said the state Umno Liaison Committee would recommend more women candidates, who had strong religious background, as candidates for coming elections.

"Previously we had MPs with religious background but we didn't highlight this aspect. We also realised that women's role was becoming more important in garnering support for the elections," he said.

However, Tajol Rosli said the choice of women candidates was not new to Umno compared to PAS which was against this, but now, wanted to field women candidates in the upcoming election.

-- BERNAMA

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