

25/07/2004

Najib reminds contenders to abide by `gag order`

PEKAN, Sat. - Datuk Seri Najib Razak has called on contenders for posts in the coming Umno elections to abide by the directive not to make Press statements.

Najib, who won the party deputy presidency uncontested, said the "gag order", issued by the party's management committee, was to curb excessive campaigning.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the committee felt it was necessary to stop the "mud slinging" between candidates in the media as it could damage the party.

"We do not want them to use the Press to insult each other or throw baseless accusations which can harm the image of the party."

Najib said this after presenting dividends to participants of the Orang Asli Resettlement Project at Kampung Sawah Batu, Bebar, today.

In Kuala Lumpur, Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein expressed the hope that Youth delegates to the party's general assembly in September would choose the right candidates.

"I hope they will pick those who represent the movement's struggle and challenges.

"Candidates should be chosen for their capability and ability to contribute to the party," he said at Stadium Juara Bukit Kiara.

Some 70 aspirants will fight it out for the 20 seats in Umno Youth's executive council elections in September.

Hishammuddin said more than 80 per cent of the aspirants were new faces.

A total of 195 names were nominated for the seats.

Among them are Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, former National Mosque chief imam Datuk Firdaus Ismail and the movement's executive secretary, Harrison Hassan.

(END)