

08/07/2003

BN mulls move for candidates to declare assets

KUANTAN, Mon. - Any decision to make it compulsory for Umno and Barisan Nasional candidates in the next general election to declare their assets will have to be discussed at the highest level in the party, Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said.

He was commenting on the concern that some BN state assemblymen who had no qualms about showing off their opulent lifestyle when meeting ordinary folk would cause the coalition to lose votes.

"We in Umno have been monitoring this matter.

"In fact, at the Federal level, we are required to declare our assets to Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) and I believe in the States, the Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers require the same from assemblymen.

"I believe all Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers have the data on their respective state assemblymen and they would be using this to make recommendations on the candidates to contest in the elections," he said.

Khalil said all State Umno and BN liaison committee chairmen would give the backgrounds of the candidates to the party leadership before the election.

"In some cases, our candidates, before becoming state representatives, were already operating their own businesses.

"However, evaluations are done on the candidates before they are named for the general election.

"I believe each State liaison committee chairman has his own system," he said.

Khalil was speaking to reporters after opening the Beserah State Assemblyman's Cup football tournament at the Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Karang field here yesterday.