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Dr Mahathir says his children will not contest in elections

Zubaidah Abu Bakar; Alina Simon

JITRA, Fri. - While reiterating that he will definitely retire in October, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he did not want his children to contest in elections.

He stressed that he did not wish to have a dynasty and he would ensure that none of his children stand in any election.

"I give my assurance that I will not allow any of them to stand here (constituencies in Kubang Pasu) or in other constituencies.

"This is my assurance. I do not want to have a dynasty. I don't wish to create one," said the Prime Minister, who is also Kubang Pasu Umno chief, when winding up the debate at the division's meeting at Dewan Wawasan.

Dr Mahathir said he did not know who would stand as the Barisan Nasional candidates in Kubang Pasu but he hoped those chosen would be able to ensure a victory.

He reminded the people in Kubang Pasu that choosing Pas would be a huge loss for them.

In reiterating his intention to retire in October, Dr Mahathir said he would keep his word that he would step down otherwise the people would think that he was playacting.

Dr Mahathir touched on the matter following a resolution by the division today urging him to continue to lead the country.

He said he had wanted to step down at last year's Umno general assembly but was coaxed by many people, including his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, to continue until October.

"I believe if I renege on my promise (to step down in October), my leadership will no longer be credible.

"People will say that this is Dr Mahathir's sandiwara and Umno and I will be ridiculed," he added.

Dr Mahathir said his resignation would not create problems as Abdullah is able to lead the country.

A motion from the division to increase the party membership fee from RM1 to RM2 and life membership from RM100 to RM200 was passed.

Dr Mahathir, who opposed the motion, said increasing the membership fee by RM1 would not make much difference in improving the party's coffer in the long run.