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`Nothing wrong in requiring election candidates to declare their assets'

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammd Taib said there is nothing wrong in extending the requirement to declare assets to candidates contesting in the general election but the proposal has to be deliberated further by party leaders.

"It is a good idea as this will portray transparency of the ruling government," he said.

On the practicality of imposing such conditions since candidates would be informed only at the last minute that they would be contesting under the Barisan Nasional ticket, Muhammad said this issue would have to be addressed.

Muhammad said if this ruling was made compulsory, candidates would have to be honest about their wealth.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said cheating could happen if this proposal was implemented and warned BN election candidates against concealing their assets by transferring these to someone else.

He had said that action would be taken against them if they were found to have done so.

In Kota Kinabalu, Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Musa Aman welcomed Dr Mahathir's statement, saying that Sabah Umno would abide by whatever decision the party's supreme council would be making on the matter.

"We have no problem with the warning," Musa, who is State BN chairman and Sabah Umno chief, said.

In Alor Star, MCA deputy president Datuk Chan Kong Choy said it was a good suggestion and if the BN decides that all their election candidates must declare their assets, then MCA representatives would do so.

MIC vice-president Datuk S. Veerasingam said to date, there had been no such complaints against MIC representatives.

"The leadership must at all times be on their toes to ensure elected candidates are always devoted to serving the people," he said.