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#### Wealth account

THE proposal to make it mandatory for Umno or Barisan Nasional candidates to declare their assets is an indication of the ruling party's commitment to put in place accepted standards of public behaviour for its candidates and to adopt the best practices of good and clean governance. In other countries, it is parliament, for example, the British House of Commons, rather than political parties which have instituted this requirement, or are considering it. The declaration of wealth is seen as a key feature in efforts to make politics more transparent and to prevent corruption among elected officials.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has warned of stern action against financial improprieties. Although the proposal has not yet been formalised, the fact that the idea has been floated shows how conscious the ruling party is of the need for irreproachable behaviour from its elected representatives. The electorate will reject candidates who are suspected of immoral behaviour, ranging from sexual misconduct to inappropriate nightclubbing, or tainted with bribery and corruption scandals, or flaunt their wealth in unacceptable ways.

Members of Parliament and State Assemblies must not misuse their public offices for personal gain. They must not allow the pursuit of their private interests to interfere or conflict with the proper discharge of their duties as elected representatives. They must not betray the mandate given to them by the electors and must honestly seek to implement the election promises they made.