'Winnable candidates' will cause disputes, says ex-PM
Malaysiakini.com
September 12,2011

The selection of winnable candidates for the general election will cause disputes between the party leadership and members at the grassroots, former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad believes.

He said the selection of winnable candidates depended on the assessments made by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his advisory panel.

However, Mahathir said, those assessments and opinions would probably differ from the opinions of party members, and hence, would lead to a situation where a war would be launched to undermine the "winnable" candidate by dissatisfied parties.

"Hence, when the party has decided to name its candidates, all quarters must be made to give full support to ensure victory for the selected candidates," he said at the recording of the 'Bicara Negarawan' programme at Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya today.

The panellists on the programme were Bernama editor-in-chief Yong Soo Heong, Utusan Malaysia deputy editor-in-chief Zaini Hassan and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) lecturer Jeniri Amir.

'No harm waiting a little longer for polls'

Present were Mahathir's wife Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Information, Communications and Culture Minister Rais Yatim and his wife Masnah Rais.

Mahathir said Najib, who is also BN chairman, should explain to potential candidates the importance of getting support from the grassroots.

"It's vital to ensure victory for the party so that the people will benefit from it," he said.

When asked when was the most suitable time to hold the general election, Mahathir said: "No harm in waiting a little longer."

"It can also give more time for Najib to decide who should be fielded," he said.

Meanwhile, Mahathir also said there were certain quarters who were trying to mock the contributions of the country's first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, as a freedom fighter as they refused to recognise Umno's struggle.

"They are mocking Tunku Abdul Rahman by claiming that he wasn't a freedom fighter, and instead, they are promoting the image of Communist Party of Malaya chief Chin Peng.

"This is all done to win support in politics," he added.

- Bernama

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