

**Bagan Pinang: No support for Isa from Mahathir**  
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Umno should pick a candidate who is free of money politics for the Bagan Pinang state by-election, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He believed that the BN could win the by-election on Oct 11 with a big majority because the seat was Umno's stronghold.

Having corruption-free candidates would be a very important factor in Bagan Pinang as well as in the next general election, he told reporters after attending Menteri Besar Mohamad Hasan's Aidilfitri open house in Rantau here.

"For me, it's not just this place. The people throughout Malaysia want to know whether we are serious about eradicating money politics, corruption and so forth," he said.

While the former premier did not name any names, he was clearly referring to former Umno vice-president Isa Samad, whose supporters are campaigning for him to be picked as the candidate.

Isa, who was menteri besar of Negeri Sembilan from 1982 to 2004, rose rapidly within Umno ranks until he was accused of vote-buying.

That landed him in a six-year suspension by the Umno disciplinary committee but the punishment was shortened to three years.

Isa, who heads the Umno Teluk Kemang division, is believed to be seeking to make a political comeback by contesting the Bagan Pinang by-election.

While the Umno Teluk Kemang division, which include the Bagan Pinang state constituency, has proposed Isa as the candidate for the by-election, the final decision will however be left to the top party leadership.

**Dr M: Think of party, not individuals**

Mahathir said that if Umno fielded an candidate who was not clean, it might win in Bagan Pinang but would lose in other constituencies.

He also feared that the party would lose badly in the 13th general election if the trend continued.

"I'm not thinking about individuals. I know everyone and I don't care about anyone but I'm thinking only of the party," he said.

The Bagan Pinang seat fell vacant following the death of incumbent Azman Mohamad Noor of the BN on Sept 4. Nomination is on Oct 3.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin will be announcing the Umno candidate for Bagan Pinang on Sept 29 during BN's state level Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration in Port Dickson.

- *Bernama*

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