

Dr M supports sacking of rebel candidates, says party comes first
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By Md Izwan

ALOR SETAR, April 21 — Barisan Nasional (BN) members who run in Election 2013 as independents must be sacked, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said last night, as he emphasised the importance of party over candidate in any general election.

The former prime minister said that BN members who stood as independents did so because they were too impatient to become candidates, which was futile because in the end, they cannot be candidates when they are fired.

“Isn’t it something of a loss when you are sacked? If we are patient, wait a while, maybe we can be a candidate again, but when you are sacked, you can’t be a candidate.”

“If we interfere, anyone from BN who stands independently will be fired,” the veteran politician said at a Kedah BN Youth rally in Mergong near here.

Dr Mahathir (picture) said all members should accept the decision that was made by Datuk Seri Najib Razak and throw their support behind him, as opposed to standing as independents in protest.

“Najib chose the candidates, no need to say anything else lah. Just support,” he also said in front of about 300 BN supporters in attendance.

“The party must win, not just the candidate. If the party doesn’t win, how are we going to form the government?” he added.

The nominations process for the 13th general election yesterday resulted in several seats being contested by more than two candidates, with some seats seeing competition between six or seven candidates.

Many independent candidates were party leaders but were not shortlisted as candidates.

Among them were Wanita Umno deputy chief Datuk Kamalia Ibrahim who filed nomination forms as an independent candidate for the Kuala Kangsar federal seat.

Former Umno deputy minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shariff Omar also fielded himself in the parliamentary constituency of Tasek Gelugor as an independent.

Felda Adela Umno branch deputy chief Mohd Azaman Johari also decided to join the fray for the Pengerang federal seat.

Dr Mahathir also promised the people that if the Najib government failed to keep its promises in its manifesto, he himself would protest and fight the government as he did in the 2008 general elections.

“If the central government doesn’t do it, tell me.”

“If they don’t fulfil their promises, I will personally fight them,” said Dr Mahathir as he was cheered with cries of “Hidup Tun”.

About 13.3 million registered voters will cast their ballots in the upcoming general elections.

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