

Rais Likens Umno's Mass Electoral Campaigning To Beauty Contest
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KUANTAN, Oct 8 (Bernama) -- Umno Supreme Council member Tan Sri Dr Rais Yatim today likened the mass campaigning by Umno electoral candidates to a beauty contest.

"They just sit on stage like models, but do not get the opportunity to give their views or make suggestions," he said.

This kind of campaigning did not bring any benefit to the individual, he told reporters at a programme where he met with the staff and undergraduates of the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuantan.

Dr Rais, who is IIUM president, said the conditions governing campaigning in this Umno elections should be changed to allow the candidates to form groups and be allowed to express their views.

"I see that many supreme council candidates are just being paraded; we do not know what they are capable of doing if elected because they are not given the chance to give their views," he said.

Dr Rais said if there was no relaxation in the conditions for campaigning by the candidates, only the popular ones would win.

"The victorious will be those who usually appear over the radio and television because they are well-known; the little-known candidates will not win. A relaxation in the campaigning will give all candidates an equal chance (in the elections)," he said.

Almost 150,000 Umno members are due to elect candidates to the party's divisional and central posts on Oct 12 and 19.

On a suggestion by former Umno deputy president Tun Musa Hitam that all the six vice-presidential candidates be allowed to participate in a debate on television, Dr Rais said the candidates should take advantage of such an opportunity instead of seeing it as just an election gimmick.

A debate would enable the voters to know more about a candidate in terms of his or her service to and struggle for the party, he said.

The race for the three posts of vice-president involves six people -- the three incumbents Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal and Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and the three challengers, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Dr Mahathir, Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad and former Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam.

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