

### **334 barred from contesting in Umno polls**

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**BY MUZLIZA MUSTAFA**

A total of 334 Umno members have been barred from contesting various positions in the upcoming Umno division elections after checks showed that they had been declared bankrupt by the Insolvency Department.

Umno selection committee chairman Tan Sri Tajol Rosli Ghazali said they were among 868 Umno members whose names were removed from the final list.

"As for the rest, 495 withdrew from contesting and 39 were found to have disciplinary problems," he told a press conference at Umno headquarters in Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur today.

He said after all the filtering and checks, the committee gave its approval to 33,012 candidates to contest various posts in the party polls on October 12 and October 19.

On October 12, the delegates will cast their votes to choose their representatives in all posts in the Umno Youth, Puteri and Wanita wings and on October 19 for the supreme council and vice-president's posts.

Among those allowed to contest is Tun Faisal Ismail Aziz whose nomination form had been rejected by the committee in the early filtering process.

His application was initially rejected because Tun Faisal, who is Umno Youth exco member, had never served as a divisional committee member or supreme council member.

Tajol Rosli said Tun Faisal was allowed to contest under "special circumstances".

"He is not eligible under one provision of the party constitution but his application was approved based on another provision because he was nominated by Umno Youth," he explained.

Tun Faisal is one of four Youth candidates vying for a seat in the party's top decision-making body.

All supreme council candidates in the October 19 polls must have served at least one term as either a divisional committee member or a supreme council member.

When contacted, Tun Faisal said he is grateful to be allowed to contest but admitted he was behind in campaigning as his name had only been announced once at a candidates-meet-delegates function.

"My name was only announced at a function held by Umno Federal Territory at a meet-and-greet-the-delegates function last week. So I have to work extra hard to gain the confidence of the delegates," he said.

As for Gombak Setia Umno branch chairman Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Zainul Fitri Othman whose name had been rejected, Tajol Rosli said his appeal has been denied.

Meanwhile, Umno executive secretary Datuk Rauf Yusuh said the list released today is final and no further appeals would be entertained.

Rauf also said that out of 146,000 delegates, 1,703 were declared bankrupt. He said the voting rights of bankrupt members were now limited to their branch.

"They are not allowed to cast votes for the supreme council and vice-president posts. We will enclose a letter from the insolvency department to them for their reference," he said.

On complaints about the rigid rules of campaigning imposed on candidates, Rauf said these should be referred to the disciplinary committee and not the selection committee.

"The chairman Tan Sri Tajol Rosli has no say in this," he said

Several candidates contesting in the party polls have complained that the campaigning rules were too strict and unfair to those who have no ministerial posts as they only have the meet-and-greet functions to introduce themselves to delegates.

Negeri Sembilan Umno liaison chairman Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan told Bernama two days ago that the party's election code of ethics, which specifies that candidates cannot campaign solo, is not wise.

He was commenting on the reaction among candidates contesting in the party polls, who were facing difficulties in campaigning and felt the conditions set by the party leadership were too stringent.

Among the conditions laid down for the candidates are that they are not allowed to use the media to promote themselves or use agents, lobbyists and campaign managers.

Candidates can only promote themselves through official functions organised by the state's party liaisons.

They are, however, allowed to use social media for campaigning, provided they do not contravene party regulations. - October 7, 2013.

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