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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 22 (BERNAMA) -- THE BARISANNASIONAL SUPREME COUNCIL IS TO MEET SOON TO DISCUSS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN THE MCA IN WHICH THE TAN KWON SWAN FACTION HAS INITIATED A REFERENDUM MOVEMENT TO BRING THE PARTY CRISIS TO AN END. PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, WHO IS ALSO BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) CHAIRMAN, SAID TODAY HE WOULD CALL FOR THE MEETING WHEN BN SECRETARY-GENERAL ENCIK GHAFAR BABA RETURNS FROM OVERSEAS.

+AT SOME TIME OR OTHER, BARISANNASIONAL WILL HAVE TO SIT DOWN AND DISCUSS THIS MATTER. AT THE MOMENT, WE HAVE NOT HELD A MEETING BECAUSE ENCIK GHAFAR IS AWAY, + HE TOLD REPORTERS. HE WAS RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS ON A RESOLUTION APPROVED DURING THE WEEKEND TO PETITION THE MCA CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO HOLD A REFERENDUM AMONG MEMBERS TO RESOLVE THE PROTRACTED PARTY CRISIS.

MORE THAN 1,500 DELEGATES AT THE +SAVE THE PARTY+ CONVENTION ORGANIZED BY THE TAN KWON SWAN FACTION AT GENTING HIGHLANDS RECENTLY VOTED IN FAVOUR OF THE REFERENDUM.

THE PETITION WHICH CALLS FOR THE REMOVAL OF ACTING MCA PRESIDENT DATUK DR NEO YEE PAN (WHO HEADS THE OTHER FACTION:) AND THE DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO PAVE THE WAY FOR HOLDING THE REFERENDUM WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE PARTY HEADQUARTERS IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS. --MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DECLINED TO COMMENT WHEN ASKED FOR HIS OPINION ON THE REFERENDUM, SAYING THAT IT WAS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR OF THE MCA.

+I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY AS IT IS AN MCA MATTER. IN FACT: IT IS NOT UP TO ME TO DETERMINE, + HE SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION WHETHER THE REFERENDUM WILL BE IN CONTEMPT OF COURT AS CIVIL CASES BROUGHT TO COURT ON THE MCA CONFLICT ARE STILL PENDING.

THE PRIME MINISTER CONFIRMED THAT ENCIK TAN MET HIM ON THURSDAY -- TWO DAYS BEFORE THE +SAVE THE PARTY+ CONVENTION -- TO BRIEF HIM ON THE CONVENTION.

+IT WAS A NORMAL MEETING. I JUST ASKED HIM WHAT THE CONVENTION IS ALL ABOUT AND WHAT HE IS DOING BY ORGANIZING IT. +

HE ALSO SAID HE DID NOT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ENCIK GHAFAR ACTING AS A MEDIATOR TO RECONCILE THE NEO YEE PAN AND TAN KWON SWAN GROUPS.

+HE MAY HAVE TALKED TO THEM IN HIS PERSONAL CAPACITY OR WHATEVER. I DO NOT KNOW, + HE SAID HE WAS ALSO CALLING FOR THE BN MEETING BECAUSE HE WANTED ENCIK GHAFAR TO APPRISE HIM OF THE DEVELOPMENTS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE WHILE HE (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR) HAD BEEN AWAY RECENTLY. --MORE

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THE MCA INTRA-PARTY CONFLICT HAS DRAGGED ON FOR A YEAR WITH NO SOLUTION IN SIGHT DESPITE EFFORTS TO RECONCILE THE TWO FACTIONS.

HOWEVER, MEDIATION EFFORTS HAVE BEEN SAID TO BE MADE AND MCA SECRETARY-GENERAL TAN SRI CHONG HON NYAN, HAS SAID THE PARTY LEADERSHIP HAD AGREED TO A -PEACE FORMULA PUT FORWARD BY A MEDIATOR.

BUT ENCIK TAN SAID THE EFFORTS FAILED BECAUSE DATUK DR NEO AND HIS FACTION WANTED A +NO CONTEST+ FOR THE THREE TOP POSTS. ---BERNAMA
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