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ATTENTION EDITORS: GARBLING EARLIER: HERE CORRECTED REPETITION:
UMNO

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KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 27⁸⁷ (BERNAMA) -- THE QUESTION OF WHETHER UMNO WILL PROCEED WITH ITS PLAN TO EXPAND TO SABAH IS EXPECTED TO FEATURE IN THE AGENDA OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING TOMORROW NIGHT.

UMNO PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAD INDICATED TO REPORTERS RECENTLY THAT THE MATTER MIGHT BE DISCUSSED.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT UMNO'S ENTRY INTO SABAH, THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SAID HE COULD NOT MAKE A DECISION ON HIS OWN BECAUSE THE PARTY'S PROPOSED EXPANSION WAS DECIDED BY THE SUPREME COUNCIL AND THE QUESTION OF WHETHER UMNO SHOULD NOW PROCEED WITH THE PLAN WAS UP TO THE COUNCIL TO DECIDE.

THE POSSIBILITY OF UMNO DROPPING THE PLAN WAS RAISED FOLLOWING A STATEMENT BY USNO PRESIDENT TUN DATU MUSTAPHA DATU HARUN WHO HAD CLAIMED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR +HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE+ TO SCRAP THE PROPOSED MOVE.

IT WAS SAID THIS AGREEMENT WAS MADE DURING HIS MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER HERE IN CONNECTION WITH THE USUKAN STATE AND LIMBAWANG PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTIONS IN SABAH. ~ MORE (ENDS
CORRECTED REPETITION)

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UMNO'S SPREAD TO SABAH WAS PLANNED FOLLOWING TUN DATU MUSTAPHA'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS RESIGNATION AS USNO PRESIDENT.

AT THAT TIME, USNO SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE LATE DATU HAMID TUN DATU MUSTAPHA, WAS SEEN AS ONE OF THE USNO TOP LEADERS PIONEERING THE MOVE TO BRING UMNO TO SABAH.

DATU HAMID WHO WAS USUKAN STATE ASSEMBLYMAN AND LIMBAWANG MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT HOWEVER DIED OF A HEART ATTACK BEFORE THE PLAN COULD TAKE FRUIT.

THE PROPOSED MOVE HAD AT THE OUTSET RAN INTO VARIOUS PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE QUESTION OF USNO MEMBERS' AUTOMATIC MEMBERSHIP IN UMNO AND THEIR PERIOD OF USNO MEMBERSHIP TO BE COUNTED AS UMNO MEMBERSHIP.

IN FACT, SOME MEMBERS OF THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL ITSELF HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL.

APART FROM THE SABAH UMNO ISSUE, THE SUPREME COUNCIL IS NOT EXPECTED TO DISCUSS EXTENSIVELY THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS AT THE UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY BEGINNING APRIL 24. -- BERNAMA

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