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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 29 (Bernama) -- A referendum cannot be held to allow the people of Sabah to decide whether they want to continue remaining in Malaysia because it will contravene the law, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the law did not allow any state to secede from the federation.

+The question of a referendum does not arise because it cannot be held,+ he told a news conference after chairing a meeting of the Umno Supreme Council at the party's headquarters here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, was commenting on a suggestion by Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) MP, Datuk Monggoh Orow, that a referendum be held in Sabah to determine whether the people wanted to remain in the federation.

Umno Sabah lodged a police report in connection with Datuk Orow's statement and called for an investigation before the situation went beyond control.

Newly-appointed Umno Supreme Council member, Tun Datu Mustapha Datu Harun, told reporters that only a handful of PBS leaders wanted Sabah to secede from Malaysia but the people wanted to remain in the federation. -- Bernama

♥29/08/19-59MST