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PM WELCOMES CALL FOR STANDARDISATION IN BN MEMBERSHIP

Mahathir - PBDS

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SUBANG, Sept 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today welcomed a suggestion for amendment of the rules governing membership of the Barisan Nasional to prevent component parties contesting against one another in elections.

He said the position of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) as a BN component at the federal level but in the opposition in Sarawak had caused an awkward situation in the coalition.

The PBDS contests along with the other EN component parties in a general election but takes on the BN in Sarawak during state elections.

+The suggestion is a good one. The difference (at federal and state level) has placed us (BN) in an awkward situation, + he told reporters at the Kuala Lumpur international airport on his return from a visit to Mexico and after attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Nevertheless, he said, the suggestion had to be looked at thoroughly, and that the Federal, BN, Sarawak RN Three and PBDS leaders must discuss the matter with an open mind.

+We must understand the actual situation and position before arriving at any decision, + he said. -- more

▼29/09/12-01MST

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Mahathir - PBDS 2 Kuala Lumpur

Deputy Prime Minister Encik Ghafar Baba had said that he would raise the proposal at a meeting of the BN Supreme Council scheduled for early next year.

Encik Ghafar, who is BN secretary-general, had made the suggestion to avert contests among BN component parties in elections. He had also said that BN component parties should be required to "use only the BN symbol in elections.

Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, who was among those at the airport to greet Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, said he felt that the politics practised by the PBDS of being in and out of the BN at the same time must be stopped before the situation got out of hand.

+The politics of having one foot inside (as a BN component) and the other outside must be stopped now before the situation worsens, + he told reporters.

Datuk Mohamed, who is Umno secretary-general, said the PBDS position was unhealthy for the BN and would adversely affect the strength of the coalition.

+We need a strong government which enjoys undivided support, especially in our efforts to make Vision 2020 (of making Malaysia a developed nation in 30 years) a reality, + he said. -- more

▼29/09/12-19MST

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Mahathir - PBDS 3 Kuala Lumpur

PBDS president Datuk Leo Moggie, explaining his party's position in the BN, i.s reported to have said that the party would remain committed to the BN led by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir.

Datuk Moggie, who is Works Ministers, had said he would leave 'it to the BN leadership to decide on PBDS' membership in the coalition.

Asked about the future of the PBDS in the BN, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir replied: +Everything is possible+.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he was happy and proud of the BN Three victory in the Sarawak state election yesterday. BN Three won 49 seats and the PBDS the remaining seven.

He said he was also happy that all the DAP candidates lost. The party had contested in 18 constituencies. Permas, Parti Negara and independent candidates also did not win any seat. -- more

♥29/09/12-41MST

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Mahathir - PBDS 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

The prime minister said he had expected the PBDS to win several seats although he was convinced that the party would be unable to form the state government. The PBDS had fielded candidates in 34 constituencies.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that now that the Sarawak government had obtained the mandate from the people, it should concentrate on development.

Also at the airport to greet Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Sit-i Hasmah Mohamed Ali, were Encik Ghafar, Cabinet ministers, and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's elder sisters Habsah and Rafiah. -- Bernama

♥29/09/12-44MST