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Najib - Usno

USNO ASSEMBLYMEN TO PLEDGE LOYALTY TO BARISAN NASIONAL

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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- All eleven members of the United Sabah National Organisation (Usno), a component of the Barisan Nasional (BN), are expected to reaffirm their loyalty to the BN at a meeting reportedly scheduled for today with Prime Minister and BN Chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Umno Youth head Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today, "I understand they will pledge to the Prime Minister that they will not join the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) to form a coalition government in the state."

Speaking to reporters at the Sungai Besi RMAF Station, here Najib, who is Defence Minister, said the eleven Usno assemblymen had pledged to him that they would be with the BN when he was in Sabah recently and they had also given the same pledge when they were here.

"We welcome this pledge... Umno indeed wishes to co-operate closely with the Usno assemblymen," he said.

A newspaper in a front page report today said all eleven Usno assemblymen had been asked to meet Dr Mahathir to explain their stand over the talk about the formation of a coalition government in Sabah between Usno and the PBS.

Dr Mahathir this morning launched the Mofaz Air helicopter passenger charter and cargo service at the Sungai Besi Station before leaving for Kedah to open the Perwaja Steel Mill in Gurun. -- more

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Najib - Usno 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Najib said he was convinced of the sincerity of the Usno assemblymen in their expression of continued support for the BN.

"They are fully convinced that their future lies with the Barisan Nasional and not the PBS," he said.

Apart from Umno and Usno, other BN component parties in Sabah are the Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (AKAR), Parti Liberal Demokratik (LDP) and the MCA.

The PBS withdrew from the BN just before the general election of 1990. Since the PBS came to power in 1985, Usno has been an opposition party in Sabah.

Najib said it was better for Usno to remain in the BN and expressed the hope that the party would not impose conditions that the BN would find hard to accept.

"In fact they are with Umno but only for technical reasons they cannot leave Usno as this will lead to by-elections," he said.

Sabah's anti-hop laws prevent assemblymen from defecting. -- Bernama

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