

CNS0540

R PE 10-04 00159 EA233

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Mahathir-Sabah

PBS-USNO COALITION GOVERNMENT WILL NOT LAST LONG, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS)-Usno coalition government would not last long.

Usno president Datu Amirkahar Tun Datu Mustapha, who was only appointed State Agriculture and Fisheries Minister appeared not to have been given the post he aspired in the state Cabinet, he added.

This was Dr Mahathir's first comment on the PBS-Usno coalition government, formed last Wednesday.

He was speaking to reporters on his return here from Jeddah, accompanied by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, after performing the umrah, following an eight-day visit to Uzbekistan and Iran.

Dr Mahathir, who is Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said it was up to the BN Supreme Council to decide whether to expel Usno. -- more

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▼10/04/11-28MST

CNS0571

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Mahathir-Sabah 2 Kuala Lumpur

"Umno is of the opinion that it is not suitable for them to remain in the BN," he said, adding that this stand would be discussed at the Umno Supreme Council meeting on Monday.

He said Usno leaders who joined the coalition government placed importance on self-interest rather than to serve Sabah, much less the country.

Others given posts in the state coalition government were Usno secretary-general Askalani Abdul Rahim who was appointed Culture, Youth and Sports Minister, Pitting Mohd Ali and Mohd Said Senang, both State Assemblymen, who were appointed Assistant Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Assistant Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, respectively.

Dr Mahathir said: "They regard being elected representatives as a good opportunity to earn a living and, more than that, to get rich, position, status and other perks."

Such people were not needed and unsuitable for BN, he added. -- more

ZAA MTA LDB

♥10/04/12-16MST

CNS0577

R PE 10-04 00172 EA239

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Mahathir-Sabah 3 Kuala Lumpur

"To me what has occurred was a very good thing as we now know who are sincere and who are not," said Dr Mahathir who on Feb 23 received a delegation of Usno state elected representatives led by Amirkahar who pledged support for BN.

Six Usno state elected representatives, Dayang Mahani Tun Pengiran Ahmad Rafee (Lumadan), Aklee Abbas (Sukau), Nasir Tan Sri Sakaran (Sulabayan), Karim Bujang (Bogawan), Hajiji Mohamed Nor (Sulaman) and Datu Ismail Datu Jook (Balong) joined Umno last week in keeping with their pledge to support BN and Umno.

Describing the action of the Usno leaders who joined up with PBS as "frogs always leaping around" and "flies hovering for food", Dr Mahathir hoped the people of Sabah, especially Usno supporters, see for themselves the type of people they elected.

He said he was not surprised with their action as he had his suspicions from the beginning. -- more

ZAA MTA LDB

♥10/04/12-27MST

CNS0597

R PE 10-04 00196 EA241

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Mahathir-Sabah 4 Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir said that during his meeting with the Usno elected representatives they voiced all kinds of complaints, purportedly, that they were not given allocations and business opportunities to meet the expenses for their constituencies.

"I think there is no need to have millions of ringgit and business for one to be an elected representative, even in Sabah," he said.

Asked about Amirkahar's previous application and acceptance to become an Umno member, Dr Mahathir said what happened showed that Amirkahar had no stand whatsoever.

"He applied to be an Umno member without stating that at the same time he was forging relations with PBS... it is clear that such people cannot be trusted," he added.

As to the validity of the coalition government with Amirkahar being an Umno member, Dr Mahathir said he could not comment from that aspect but he felt the coalition government would not last long.

To Amirkahar's statement that Usno's position in BN "was of no significance and did not make any difference," Dr Mahathir said it was just an excuse. -- more

▼10/04/12-46MST

CNS0614

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Mahathir-Sabah 5 (last) Kuala Lumpur

"The real reason is that they did not get opportunities, did not secure contracts -- that's all to it," he added.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayub, who was at the airport, said the Registrar of Societies was investigating the possibility that there were Usno Supreme Council members who were at the same time members of Umno.

"If Amirkahar had been accepted as an Umno member, he ceases to be an Usno member and Usno president," he said.

Last Wednesday, Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said the Umno Supreme Council on March 6 approved Amirkahar's application to become an Umno member and his membership number was 01915410.

Mohamed said Pitting and Said were also accepted as Umno members.

Meanwhile, Parit Buntar Umno division held a special meeting last night and called on the Umno and BN leadership to expel Usno for forming the coalition government with PBS.

"The action is politically immoral," the division's leader Datuk Abdul Rahman Suliman, who is the Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry Parliamentary Secretary, said in a statement to Bernama. -- Bernama

ZAA MTA LDB