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Mahathir-PBS

UMNO TO GO TO COURT IF PBS GOVT EXPELS UMNO ASSEMBLYMEN

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 18, (Bernama) -- Umno will take court action if the Sabah state government expels from the State Legislative Assembly the six Umno assemblymen who had joined Umno recently, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said Umno would seek the court's ruling as it did with the case of the two Kelantan assemblymen (for Limbungan and Sungai Pinang) and in the case of Sabah's "anti-hop" law.

"In fact, the Sabah government has no right to expel anyone, it goes against democratic principles," Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, told reporters after flagging off the Asean Run for Humanity in his capacity as president of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society at the Dataran Merdeka, here.

He said all these actions of the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) government were ways to use political power to deny people of their rights. He said one could not arbitrarily accuse people, judge them and pass sentence.

The six assemblymen - Dayang Mahani Tun Pengiran Ahmad Rafee (Lumadan), Aklee Abbas (Sukau), Nasir Tan Sri Sakaran (Sulabayan), Karim Bujang (Bongawan), Hajiji Mohamed Nor (Sulaman) and Datu Ismail Datu Jook (Balong)

- joined Umno early this month after five of their colleagues in Usno forged a coalition government with the PBS without the blessings of the Barisan Nasional (BN). -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the six assemblymen should not be afraid to confirm their having joined Umno should the PBS government ask them to.

He said Umno was prepared to face an election in Sabah. Nevertheless, it would appeal to the court if the assemblymen were expelled, he said.

Citing what he described as an abuse of power, Dr Mahathir said Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan had the assembly to approve a salary increase for assemblymen and ministers as a bribe with government funds to coax the Umno assemblymen to form the coalition with the PBS government.

At the ceremony, Kuala Lumpur Datuk Bandar Datuk Dr Mazlan Ahmad and a group of other runners presented the Asean torch to Dr Mahathir who then passed it to Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib for a symbolic run over two kilometres.

Earlier, the Prime Minister received contributions amounting to RM735,000 from 12 companies for the society. The run began on April 1 in Manila and will end on May 8 in Bangkok. -- Bernama

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