

BARISAN TO SACK USNO, SAYS Dr M

S

4 MAY 1993

By PAUL GABRIEL and NIZAM ISA

ALOR STAR: The Barisan Nasional has decided to expel Usno from the ruling coalition, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

For formality's sake, he said, the Barisan supreme council would meet to seek the official consent of all component parties on the expulsion.

"It will be the Barisan's decision, not mine. Usno has to be expelled," the coalition's chairman told reporters after opening the Jitra district hospital (see Page 2).

Dr Mahathir said Usno's decision to merge with Sabah's PBS government had proved that the party had no principles.

He also said the six Usno assemblymen who joined Umno did not owe any explanation to Usno as they were no longer its members.

To a question, Dr Mahathir said Umno would resort to the courts if the Usno-PBS coalition Government acted against the six assemblymen.

On Saturday, Usno secretary-general Askalani Abdul Rahim said the six had been given two weeks to state their position in the party.

He said the six would be considered as having resigned from Usno if they did not reply.

On the PBDS application to rejoin the state Barisan in Sarawak, Dr Mahathir said it was up to the state Barisan to decide.

In Kuala Lumpur, former Usno deputy president Tan Sri Sakaran Dandai urged Usno to resolve its position first instead of questioning the six assemblymen.

"The last Usno general assembly (when the supreme council members were elected) is being scrutinised by the Registrar of Societies because they did not hold any annual general meeting at the branch and division levels," he told reporters at Parliament House.

Sakaran, who is a Sabah Umno committee member, said if Usno still insisted for the six to reply to the letters, Umno would refer the matter to its legal advisers.