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BN COMPONENT PARTIES FREE TO OPEN MEMBERSHIP TO ANYONE, MAHATHIR
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LANGKAWI, Jan 16 (Bernama) -- Component parties of the Barisan Nasional (BN) are free to accept members from the various communities in the country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

"We welcome this extension of membership by the various parties so that there is no over concentration on one community or only one descent," he told reporters at the Langkawi Airport before leaving for Kuala Lumpur.

He expressed confidence that this move would not create any tussle among component parties of the BN as anyone was free to enter any BN component party provided the person susbcribed to the BN principles.

The Prime Minister said this when commenting on the MCA's move to admit anyone with Chinese ancestry as members.

In announcing the move yesterday, MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the party decided on this following numerous applications for membership from people with mixed parentage. -- more
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Dr Mahathir said BN component parties from the very beginning had been free to accept members from the various communities just like Gerakan and Umno.

"Umno too is free, we have accepted Thais, we have accepted Gurkhas and people from Sabah also we have accepted," he said.

On the MCA's decision which was taken at the party central executive committee meeting yesterday, the Prime Minister said, "That is their right, they can accept anyone into the party, that is their right."

Replying to reporters, Dr Mahathir said that the MCA did not seek the BN's permission to do this.

"They did not ask for the BN's permission, the same with us (Umno) we too did not ask for the BN permission to open membership to non-Malays and non-Muslims," he said. -- Bernama
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