

'RM4b missing from Sabah Foundation'

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KOTA KINABALU, Tues. — Investigation into the affairs of the Sabah Foundation revealed that between RM3 and RM4 billion has disappeared, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the funds should have been in the accounts of the foundation or at least with the State Government. But the State Government was still faced with financial difficulties.

"We have to find out who the culprits are as the funds which disappeared belong to the people," he said at the airport here before leaving

for Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir said investigations had to be carried out to determine how land had been allocated during the previous regime.

"We must know on what basis land and licences were given out. This is because we want to administer the State fairly to benefit all quarters, including those in the opposition.

"We do not want to repeat what the previous three Governments had done. Our aim is to be fair to all," he said.

The State Government had last month appointed a private accounting firm to investigate the financial affairs of the foundation.

On the application by the Parti Demokratik Sabah

(PDS) and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) to join the Barisan Nasional, he said the decision had yet to be made.

"The Barisan Nasional supreme council has not met yet. A meeting will be held soon to decide the matter. I cannot tell now whether the two parties will be accepted."

He said the BN was still assessing the support the two parties had to determine the extent of their following.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said the two parties had been doing a lot of work and that they had gathered their supporters, "but we are making the verification".

On Angkatan Keadilan

Rakyat's (Akar) objection to the admission of the two parties, he said: "In the BN you can have your opinion but usually when we consider we always take the consensus.

"We will take into consideration Akar's views to ascertain whether there is any basis to the objection. What is important is the interest of the BN."

Akar, one of the five BN component parties in Sabah, had at its supreme council meeting recently unanimously decided to oppose the admission of the PDS and PBRS into the Barisan.

Akar contended there was no need to accept the two parties as the former could represent the Dusun

and Kadazan communities.

Dr Mahathir said the Deputy Chief Minister's post reserved for the Dusun-Kadazan communities would only be filled after the BN had decided on the application of the two parties.

"I wish to stress that the Deputy Chief Minister's post is reserved for the Dusun-Kadazan community."

He said under the BN Government no one community would be allowed to monopolise positions.

Asked whether he was satisfied with the performance of the newly formed BN Government, Dr Mahathir said administration-wise it was already on a proper footing.