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Mahathir-agreement

AMENDMENT OF SABAH CONSTITUTION WILL NOT AFFECT 20-POINT AGREEMENT

KUALA LUMPUR, March 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today a review or the abolition of the Sabah Special 20-Point Agreement does not arise in a move to amend the state constitution.

What was important in the proposed amendment to the Sabah constitution was the curtailment of the powers of the chief minister of the state concerned, he told reporters on his return from the inaugural Asia-Europe Meeting in Bangkok.

"If the 20-point agreement is to be reviewed, it should be done for both parties. It should not be confined only to Sabah but to cover all (Malaysia) so as to eliminate fears that the government will take action against or favour any particular party," he said commenting on the statement by Umno Youth leader, Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik who suggested that the 20-point Agreement be abolished.

"After 10 years of the implementation of the 20-Point Agreement, we should actually study to bring closer relations between the two parties and to integrate Sabah with peninsular Malaysia," he said.

However, he added, there were still certain obstacles for peninsular Malaysians who intended to go to Sabah.

"What is important is to consider ourselves as Malaysian citizens," he said.

Last Thursday, Rahim said that in amending the Sabah constitution, a study should be made to abolish the Special 20-Point Agreement granted to Sabah and Sarawak.

Rahim's statement had drawn various reactions from Sabahans and Sarawakians particularly political parties which criticised Rahim and felt that the question should never have been brought up. -- BERNAMA

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