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Mahathir-Sabah

MAHATHIR TO MEET SABAH BN COMPONENT PARTIES

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will meet leaders of Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties before deciding on the issue of rotating the state Chief Minister's post.

The Prime Minister said the meeting would be held separately to enable him to obtain their views on the matter.

The date of the meeting has yet to be decided, Dr Mahathir, who is also the Umno president, told a news conference after chairing a party Supreme Council meeting, here, today.

At today's meeting, the Supreme Council gave the mandate to Dr Mahathir to use his discretion to resolve the issue.

"I have said (to the Supreme Council) that I will not make a decision until I am able to meet the leaders of the Sabah BN component leaders," he said.

The issue arose because there was no consensus among the Sabah BN component party members on rotating the Chief Minister's post as Datuk Salleh Tun Said's term ends on March 17.

Sabah BN component parties including the state Umno liaison committee were reported to have left it to Dr Mahathir to resolve the issue.

Dr Mahathir said that although the component parties had presented their views, he had yet to receive the views of all members.

The Sabah Umno liaison committee also submitted a letter on the matter at today's meeting but Dr Mahathir declined to reveal its contents or Sabah Umno's stand.

"They presented their views, I don't have to announce them..... I told them I will consider their views," he said.

When asked whether the issue could be resolved before March 17, Dr Mahathir said: "It ought to be".

Apart from Umno, Sabah BN consists of Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS), Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu (Akar Bersatu), Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRBS), Parti Liberal Demokratik Sabah (LDP), MCA and Gerakan.

Asked to comment on the reported differences between Parti Melayu Semangat 46 and PAS, Dr Mahathir said it was expected as the two parties did not share a common ground.

On the offer to S46 members to join Umno, he said it was open to all, from top leaders to ordinary members.

"Umno's door is open to anyone who wishes to enter provided they support Umno's cause," he added. -- BERNAMA