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Razaleigh-Umno

RAZALEIGH CONFIRMS MAY REJOIN UMNO WITH SUPPORTERS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah today confirmed he may return to Umno and bring with him all members of Parti Melayu Semangat 46.

However, he did not say when he would make the move except that it would be "perhaps fast, perhaps slow".

He said this at a news conference at his residence in Jalan Langgak Golf here.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad made the surprise announcement last night that Tengku Razaleigh might rejoin Umno.

Tengku Razaleigh said his party's supreme council has given him the mandate as president to negotiate with Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, on efforts to unite the Malays.

He said the efforts were discussed in general during his two meetings with Dr Mahathir in the past six weeks, the latest two nights ago.

"I informed Dr Mahathir that any participation by us (S46) in the efforts, whether by way of merger, reunification or joining Umno, must be done en bloc," he said.

He said this was because if they wished to take part in a grand endeavour which could bring gain to the Malays, it would be good for all S46 members to go in together.

However, he said, the proposed en bloc participation was not a condition.

"There's no condition, we have to work (it) out. If there is a genuine desire on everybody's part that there should be unity, let's go about it."

"The issue we are discussing does not concern myself alone as portrayed in the (press) reports today. The important thing is to bring all supporters of 46 including its members into the unity (move). The method is left to be negotiated," he said.

He said his party has 400,000 members.

Although he could not be certain when the move could be realised, Tengku Razaleigh said: "If we can complete everything before May 11, we will want to do it but it looks like time will not permit.

"If it can be done fast, we will have Allah to thank for; if it takes time, what can we do except to work to speed up the process."

Asked why it needed time to rejoin Umno, he said this was because he had only recently met with the Prime Minister and the matter had to be explained to S46 members.

"Then they will need time to consider ... if they agree, there will be the legal process of dissolving the party, if dissolution is necessary; it will take time," he said.

To a question, Tengku Razaleigh said: "I would like to make it clear that we did not ask for anything. I have indicated to the Prime Minister in no uncertain term that we are not looking for any position." -- BERNAMA

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