

5 MAR 1996

Mahathir-Rahim

SUPREME COUNCIL ACCEPTS RAHIM'S EXPLANATION

KUALA LUMPUR, March 5 (Bernama) -- The UMNO Supreme Council today accepted the explanation by Youth leader Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik that he did not make a statement calling for the abolition of the 20-point agreement for Sabah provided for under the Malaysia agreement.

UMNO President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Council was satisfied with Rahim's explanation at the meeting with regard to the press report which said the former Melaka Chief Minister had suggested that the 20-point agreement be abrogated.

"He (Rahim) explained that he definitely did not make the statement and he did not know from where the newspaper obtained the source of the statement," he told a press conference after chairing the monthly UMNO Supreme Council meeting at the party's headquarters at Menara Dato' Onn, Putra World Trade Centre here.

According to the Prime Minister, Rahim was very disappointed at the various accusations and criticisms against him in the press.

"I and my friends in the Council are satisfied that the denial is correct, that is he did not make the statement," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he had also been asked about the matter and his stand was that it was not related to the proposal to curtail the powers of the Sabah Chief Minister.

He said he did not know why the matter had been brought up.

Rahim later told reporters that he did not want to prolong the matter as the explanation by Dr Mahathir was already sufficient.

"I was only responding to questions from reporters whether the 20-point agreement could be reviewed together with the powers of the Chief Minister, and I replied, if need be, it could be reviewed, I did not say it should be abolished," Rahim explained.

Rahim said: "If I had said it then it's alright ... but then what was not said was reported, I feel sad over this irresponsible attitude." --

BERNAMA

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