

28 FEB 1999

Sabah-Bersekutu

HARRIS' PARTY UNLAWFUL, SAYS BERSEKUTU FOUNDER

KOTA KINABALU, Feb 28 (Bernama) -- The founder of Bersekutu, Hamid Jan, today claimed that a party with a similar name led by former Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh is unlawful.

He also said the candidates that the Harris-led Bersekutu planned to field in the March 12-13 state election would not be the lawful Bersekutu candidates as "they are not registered members of the party".

The lawful Bersekutu candidates would instead be the "registered members of Bersekutu" that Hamid's party would field in all 48 constituencies, the party founder told a press conference here.

"Our candidates will use our party symbol in the polls," he told a press conference here. It is believed that the symbol is the same as that used by the Harris-led Bersekutu.

Hamid also said he would apply for an injunction in court tomorrow to restrain Harris and his other candidates from using the Bersekutu name and symbol.

Hamid showed to reporters a copy of a letter dated Feb 24 which he claimed he sent to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

According to the letter, Hamid's party will not field any candidate in this election to ensure that the Barisan Nasional wins a two-thirds majority.

Hamid also showed the registration certificate issued to his party by the Registrar of Societies on June 15, 1990, in which the party's registered name in English was stated as Federation Sabah People Front Party

Asked why he had waited until today to make the claim against Harris' party, Hamid said he had raised the matter with the former chief minister earlier but was ignored.

"If he (Harris) wants to lead Bersekutu, I can give it to him but he should negotiate in the proper way," said Hamid.

Datuk Dzul kifli Abdul Hamid, a supreme council member of the Harris-led Bersekutu, said there should be no doubts on who headed Bersekutu as the matter had been determined by the registrar recently.

He claimed that Harris had received a letter from the registrar confirming his position as acting president of the party.

The registrar's decision was made based on the vote of no confidence against Hamid approved at a general meeting of the party, claimed Dzul kifli when contacted.

According to a copy of a letter dated Feb 27 from the Sabah Registrar of Societies to the state election officer, Harris is the president of Bersekutu. The copy was faxed to Bernama today by a spokesman of Harris.

Dzul kifli also claimed that Harris had received a letter from the Election Commission allowing his Bersekutu party to contest in this election.

-- BERNAMA

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