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Abdullah-Aliens

HOME MINISTRY STUDYING BN MEMO ON ALIENS IN SABAH

KOTA KINABALU, Aug 7 (Bernama) -- Several memoranda on the sizeable and ever growing illegal immigrant population in Sabah are being studied by the Home Ministry, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

They were submitted by component parties of the governing Barisan Nasional (BN) and highlighted an array of illegal immigrant-related issues.

"The memoranda are voluminous, touching on several matters. They are being studied for the appropriate next course of action," said Abdullah, who is also Home Minister.

He did not elaborate on the subject which was raised during Abdullah departure press conference at the airport here at the end of a one-day working visit to Sabah today.

Abdullah was also asked about public perceptions of the lingering and sticky problem of illegal immigrants in Sabah despite the government's regularisation programme.

Abdullah acknowledged that the government was understandably concerned over such perceptions.

"There are problems, so we have to overcome the perception," he said.

Asked on certain opposition parties refusing to sit on the Second National Economic Consultative Council (NECC II), Abdullah said this exemplified their inclination to remain non-committal and yet want to have the last say.

"In this way they'll be free to say what they like as they will not be bound by what is being collectively decided in the NECC II," he said.

The opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) however has two representatives on the the 155-member NECC II launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last Wednesday.

"The situation in Sabah is different from that in the peninsula. I thank them (the PBS members) for being in the NECC II and welcome their participation," said Abdullah.

While here, Abdullah also held a special meeting with state BN leaders to discuss, among other things, preparations for the BN silver jubilee celebrations.

"...we also discussed preparations for the coming general election. The date, I myself have no idea when," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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