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Umno-PBS

SABAH UMNO YOUTH REFUTES PBS CLAIM

KOTA KINABALU, June 24 (Bernama) -- The Sabah Umno Youth movement today described as unfounded the claim by Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) that Umno was wooing State Assemblymen from the opposition party to enable the rotation system for the Chief Minister's post to be abolished.

Its head, Juhari Janan said the State Assemblymen concerned had already clarified that their defection to Umno was voluntary and inducement-free.

"They had repeatedly explained that they were not influenced by anyone and that they had made the decision voluntarily," he told reporters, here.

He disclosed this when asked to comment on the statement by PBS president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan on Monday who claimed that several assemblymen from the party had been wooed to join Umno in efforts to increase the number of party members in the State Legislative Assembly.

Pairin claimed that with the increase in the number of Umno representatives in the Assembly, the party would have grounds to terminate the rotation system for the Chief Minister's post.

"There's no agenda on the part of Umno with regard to their joining the party. It's purely their decision," Juhari said alluding to the defection by the two former PBS assemblymen.

On Sunday, PBS deputy president Malek Chua, who is also State Assemblyman for Kuamut, and the Pensiangan State Assemblyman, Ulin Pamiang, left the PBS to join Umno.

They announced their decision and at the same time submitted their membership application forms to Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur.

With the move by Malek and Ulin, Umno now has 26 representatives in the Assembly compared with 24 earlier.

The defection of the two Assemblymen has now become a hot issue in Sabah, especially when PBS claimed that the two had signed documents stating their loyalty to the party.

The document which was signed by all PBS candidates in the last state election, also required the assemblymen to give up their seat upon leaving the PBS to join any other political party.

-- BERNAMA

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