

PM: We'll admit Jeffrey and Co

'But they must uphold BN's struggles'

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By Sarban Singh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. -- The Barisan Nasional will accept the return of Sabah State Assemblyman for Bingkor Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan and five others provided they discard the PBS struggle and help the ruling coalition build the country.

BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the six Parti Bersatu Sabah assemblymen should uphold the principles and objectives of the coalition once they were accepted into the fold.

"We will welcome them. If they are planning to switch, we hope it will be a sincere move," he said.

The Prime Minister was speaking to reporters after performing the ground-breaking ceremony of the Sri Rakyat Apartments in Bandar Bukit Jalil near here.

Jeffrey announced his resignation today from PBS and is poised

to rejoin BN.

Another five assemblymen who are expected to follow him are Louis Rampas (Kiulu), Edward Linggu (Tamparuli), Atong Mangabis (Matunggong), Johnny Goh Chin Lok (Inanam) and Karim Adam (Kundasang).

On whether the BN was willing to accept the PBS back into its fold, Dr Mahathir said this was not possible because the party only fought for one community in Sabah.

"They (PBS) seem to be confined to one small community, not the whole nation," he said adding that they should be made to think as Malaysians and not Sabahans.

Asked if he had any advice for the six State Assemblymen, especially Jeffrey, who was in 1994 made Federal Deputy Minister of Housing and Local Government, Dr Mahathir said this would be conveyed to them personally.

"I will whisper my advice to them. It is not good to make a public advice especially through the Press," he said in jest.

Asked why party hopping was rampant in Sabah, Dr Mahathir said this was probably because the parties were not yet committed to their struggles.

Dr Mahathir was also asked why he decided to indicate one of the main topics of his speech for the party's annual general assembly at the last Umno Supreme Council meeting.

"There are certain things which if you wait until the meeting, they will be too late.

"So, because of that, we need to give some indications -- only indications."

Dr Mahathir had said that one of the more important things he would raise in his speech was on money politics.