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Mahathir-Umno

UMNO WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY MEMBERS IN SARAWAK, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUCHING, July 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Umno will not accept any opposition or independent candidate who contests against the Barisan Nasional and wins in the coming Sarawak state election.

"Umno doesn't want to come to Sarawak," the prime minister told reporters after chairing the Sarawak BN meeting attended by leaders of Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), Sarawak United People Party (Supp), Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) and Sarawak National Party (Snap).

Among those who attended the meeting were chief minister and PBB president Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud, Supp president Tan Sri Dr George Chan and Snap president Datuk Amar James Wong.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on claims by certain individuals in the state that they would contest as independent candidates in the next state election and would apply to join Umno if they won.

The current state assembly's term expires in September next year.

"Nobody has any right to make promises that they will be accepted by Umno. We will not accept them," the prime minister said.

On the meeting, Dr Mahathir, who is here for a three-day working visit, said he explained the latest developments in the country to the Sarawak BN leaders, including the recent arm heist in Sauk, Perak.

"I re-explained the concept of BN, how it has become a successful cooperation and coalition and why they must continue with the concept because it is very good for the whole country," he said.

He said they did not discuss the state election.

On the release of another Malaysian, Abdul Jawah Salamat, by the armed group in Jolo, Philippines, on Friday, Dr Mahathir said he hoped that the release was not based on religion.

"It so happens that they were both Muslims, but I hope they were not released based on religion," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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