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Akar-Pandikar

AKAR MEMBERS FREE TO JOIN ANY PARTY, SAYS PANDIKAR

KOTA KINABALU, 21 Mei (Bernama) -- Members of the Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Akar), the Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) component party that was disbanded on Saturday, are free to join any party or set up a new party.

"If they want to join other parties, including opposition parties, or want to form a new party, that's their right because our country practises democracy," said Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia, who was Akar president.

He said this today when asked to comment on the move by almost all the Akar Supreme Council members to join Umno soon after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the BN chairman, announced Akar's dissolution at a special assembly of the party here.

Pandikar said he was leaving it to the 30,000 Akar members, including 6,000 Chinese, to decide whether to follow him and the other supreme council members to Umno or join other parties.

He said members at the divisional level wishing to join Umno would have to submit their membership forms to Umno branches.

Pandikar, who is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, was speaking to reporters after representing Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in opening an Asean student leaders conference at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) here.

-- BERNAMA

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