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BN-Reaction

BN COMPONENT PARTY LEADERS LAUD PM'S SUGGESTION FOR ONE PARTY

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- Barisan Nasional (BN) component party leaders today expressed their support in principle for Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision for BN to unite as one political party.

Deputy Umno President Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat, the secretary-general of BN has been directed to take all steps necessary to make Dr Mahathir's vision a reality.

"The suggestion by the Prime Minister will not only entrench BN as a political party but will also reflect the unity existing among the various races in the country. I am optimistic (with the realisation of this idea) the trust placed in BN by the people will be undivided," he told reporters during a break at the BN Convention here.

In his keynote address this morning, Dr Mahathir said BN leaders should close ranks and ensure that the BN functions as a party and not as a coalition of various component parties.

On the statement by the Prime Minister that there were many ungrateful people who were not thankful for the development brought about by BN, Abdullah said development cannot be stopped just because there existed such groups of people.

"We are sure the majority of the people want development and appreciate all the development which has been brought about by BN thus far," he said.

Meanwhile, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik believed that BN was moving in the right direction in wanting to become a party in its own right as the front had always continued to change to suit to the times and the needs of the people.

"We must continue to change if we still want to be a relevant front," he said.

MIC President Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the MIC would live and die with the BN and it would do whatever possible to realise the dreams of leaders.

"We are ready to accept any directive and order from the Prime Minister and the MIC is prepared to dissolve itself and consolidate within BN (if the need arises)," he said

SNAP president Datuk Amar James Wong welcomed the idea, saying that the BN should first meet more often.

"It is a good thing but the Prime Minister should first listen to the views of everybody and a consensus decision should be made," he said.

For SUPP president Datuk Amar George Chan, the BN is already one party in spirit because it had always looked after the aspirations and interests of all races in the country and not only a particular race.

SAPP president Datuk Yong Teck Lee said the BN could one day evolve into one party but force should never be part of the process.

Gerakan President Datuk Seri Lim Keng Yaik said that the BN had to continue to build a way of life or culture based on tolerance, unity, understanding, harmony and development for the people.

-- BERNAMA

YBK TLK MAM DVS