

15 JUN 2001

UPKO-Mahathir

DR MAHATHIR TO OPEN UPKO'S DELEGATES CONFERENCE NEXT MONTH

KOTA KINABALU, June 15 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to open the 7th annual congress of the United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (UPKO) when he visits Sabah next month.

UPKO president Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said in a statement today that Dr Mahathir, who is chairman of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN), has agreed to open the congress on July 24, the first day of the scheduled three-day congress.

The party is a component of the Sabah BN.

Dompok, who is also Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, said: "We are grateful that the Prime Minister has yet again kindly agreed to launch the congress."

According to the statement issued by the UPKO information unit here, this year's congress was originally supposed to be held in August.

However, since the party had agreed to hold it next month, all the divisions had been notified and preparations were in full swing, he said.

This year is the party's election year and according to UPKO's executive secretary Datuk Alex Martin, there would most likely be no contest for the presidency and deputy presidency,

Former Sabah deputy chief minister Datuk Wilfred Bumburing is the incumbent party deputy president.

For the purpose of the congress, all party divisions were required to complete their meetings by July 8, Martin said in the same statement.

-- BERNAMA

JS RYN