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Mahathir-Talks

DR MAHATHIR WILLING TO CANCEL PROGRAMME FOR UMNO-PAS TALKS

KUALA LUMPUR, March 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he is prepared to cancel his work schedule to enable the Umno-PAS unity talks to be held at a date that is suitable to PAS.

"I will cancel my programme if (they) want to meet, I will not go anywhere," he said at a press conference after chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting at the party headquarters, here today.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said the party was willing to discuss anything with PAS although the discussion might not lead to a consensus.

"We are willing to discuss anything at all, but it does not necessarily mean that we will agree (on the matter)," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno would focus on discussions pertaining to Malay interests and rights which had been enshrined in the Constitution.

"I am convinced that PAS as a Malay party would certainly want to protect them too, we too want to defend them...", he said.

At a special media conference held at the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya yesterday, Dr Mahathir outlined four main topics pertaining to the interests of the Malays enshrined in the Constitution as the agenda for discussion at the Umno-PAS unity talks.

The four topics are the Malay special priveleges, Malay language, Islam as the official religion and the status of Malay Rulers.

Dr Mahathir said he had explained to the Supreme Council today on the Umno agenda for the unity talks.

"The meeting today focused on the Umno stand with regard to Malay unity, actually we did not explain to the Supreme Council on the four topics presented because we feared there could be a leak, and as such (because of the secrecy) there are adverse interpretations that we want Malay unity to fight against the Chinese," he said.

He said Umno wanted Malay unity to protect the Malay rights as provided for in the Constitution.

He said Umno had no political motive for the meeting and was prepared to discuss anything raised by PAS.

-- BERNAMA

AFY MS ZS AO