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Abdullah-Opposition

BN COMPONENT PARTIES TO DECIDE WHETHER INVITATION STILL OPEN, SAYS DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 4 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that the opposition's rejection of the invitation to join the Barisan Nasional (BN) shows that they do care for the greater interest especially the country's development which requires consensus among the people.

He said that the opposition showed no interest whatsoever to consider the invitation as they lack the spirit of consensus for the sake of the country and instead only think of their narrow interest.

"What they could have done is to at least ask how this could be done. But the important thing for them is only their party's interest, that is if the BN will be taking all or that can we (the opposition) take all, rejecting (the spirit of) consensus," said Abdullah who is BN deputy chairman.

The BN, the party which had developed the country, always care for the greater interest of the nation, he told reporters after attending the open house of Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu here.

Abdullah was asked to comment on the reported rejection of the four opposition parties of the open invitation by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the BN chairman, for them to join the coalition, saying it was a ploy to remove the opposition parties.

"That is why we're seeking their cooperation and calling on the opposition to join us but (Kelantan Menteri Besar) Nik Aziz (Nik Mat) says it is better for us (the BN) to join PAS. Why should we join PAS, it's an opposition party," he said.

He said that the BN, as the ruling party, was actually in a position to open its doors to the opposition.

"The fact is that we (the BN) are already adequate among ourselves, but the prime minister still feels that the power-sharing needs to be expanded," he said.

Abdullah said that following the rejection, it was up to the BN component parties to decide whether or not they wish to pursue the prime minister's invitation to the opposition to join the BN.

"If they don't wish to, what's there left but it is up to the BN as to whether it (the invitation) is closed or still open," he said.

However, he said that as far as he knew, the BN component parties always practised openness in terms of accepting any opposition party to join the BN like what had happened before.

"Like in the case of the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS). It was said that they no longer have a chance but finally the BN was still open for them," he said.

Abdullah, who is Umno deputy president, said that instead, the opposition parties kept saying that they were determined to topple the BN in the next general election and that if they accepted the invitation, it would destroy democracy in the country.

Abdullah said that in a democratic system, what was essential was the fact that the people be given an opportunity to make their choice.

"Let's look at the English language issue, we have different opinions on the matter but finally, we come to some agreement, that is the BN," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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