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Abdullah-BN

DR MAHATHIR'S DECISION TO BE EXPLAINED TO BN COMPONENTS

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- A meeting of the Barisan Nasional (BN) supreme council will be convened as soon as possible to explain to its members Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's decision to resign from his posts in Umno and the BN and his subsequent retraction.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the prime minister had agreed that he convene the meeting to explain the matter to avoid any confusion.

"I will inform the BN secretary-general, Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat, to call the meeting as soon as possible," he told reporters after launching the ERL transit service at the Bandar Tasik Selatan ERL station, here.

Abdullah, who is Umno deputy president, said this when asked about his meeting with Dr Mahathir at Seri Perdana, Putrajaya, this morning before the prime minister left for a vacation in Europe.

Dr Mahathir made a surprise announcement at the Umno general assembly yesterday that he would resign from his posts as Umno president and BN chairman but Abdullah announced about an hour later that Dr Mahathir had retracted the decision following appeals by the Umno supreme council members.

Abdullah said he and the members of the Umno management and disciplinary committees had met Dr Mahathir to inform him of the Umno supreme council's decision at its extraordinary general meeting (EGM) last night to reject his resignation.

The EGM also decided that the matter be explained to Umno members throughout the country.

Asked whether Dr Mahathir gave him any message before leaving for Europe, he replied in the negative.

Abdullah also said that the prime minister needed a rest and that his vacation was planned earlier and had the agreement of the cabinet.

-- BERNAMA

AT JM JK