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Abdullah-BN

ABDULLAH WANTS FEUDING GROUPS IN PBRs AND SNAP TO UNITE

PENAMPANG, Aug 12 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today called on the feuding groups in Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRs) and Sarawak National Party (SNAP) to unite and resolve their problems amicably for the good of the Barisan Nasional (BN).

Abdullah, who is deputy BN chairman, said that this was because the strength of the BN depended on the contribution or support of its component parties.

"As such, my advice (to these parties) is, sort out your problem because we need every component party of the BN to be strong so that their support for the BN will make the BN stronger," he told reporters after opening the eighth annual delegates conference of the United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (UPKO) at the Tun Fuad Stephens Hall here.

The PBRs was caught in a dilemma when both Tan Sri Joseph Kurup and Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan claimed to have won the president's post in separate meetings held by their own supporters at its annual general meeting on Jan 28, this year.

The confusion came to an end when the Registrar of Societies (ROS) later endorsed the meeting held by Kurup's camp, thus recognising him as the rightful PBRs president.

However, the power struggle has persisted, culminating in the expulsion of Dr Kitingan from the PBRs on July 15. In defiance, Dr Kitingan has said that he did not recognise the sacking.

Meanwhile, SNAP plunged into a leadership crisis last April after the Central Executive Committee (CEC) sacked Bintulu Member of Parliament Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing for breaching the party's constitution, a move which was opposed by nine CEC members.

The group of nine, comprising five assemblymen and four MPs led by Datuk Seri Peter Tinggom, asked president Datuk Amar James Wong to step down.

Yesterday, the rival group in SNAP unanimously elected Public Health and Environment Minister Datuk William Mawan Ikom as president at its extraordinary general meeting in Kuching.

Abdullah said that there was a need for a smooth transition of power, and in Umno, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had tried to make sure that the party remained stable "if there is a change of power when he retires".

"If he (Dr Mahathir) doesn't do something, it might upset the stability of the party (Umno)," he said.

As such, he said that it was imperative for all BN component parties to avoid internal bickerings to ensure that the BN continued to be strong especially in facing the next general election.

-- BERNAMA

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