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SNAP-Appeal

JAMES WONG YET TO APPEAL AGAINST SNAP'S DEREGISTRATION

By: Alan Ting

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Former president of the deregistered Sarawak National Party (SNAP), Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min has yet to appeal to the Home Minister against the Registrar of Societies' (ROS) decision to deregister the party.

He said the faction led by him was considering whether to appeal to the Home Minister or to refer the ROS's decision to court.

"We have yet to decide," Wong, who at 81 is the country's oldest and longest serving politician, told Bernama over the phone from Kuching today.

Section 16 of the Societies Act 1966 provides them with a grace period of 30 days from the date of the ROS decision to appeal to the Home Minister. The deadline for the appeal is Dec 5.

ROS announced on Tuesday the deregistration of SNAP, founded in 1961, following the party's failure to resolve its leadership crisis.

The party of 120,000 members, has four Members of Parliament, including Deputy National Unity and Social Development Minister Tiki Lafe and six assemblymen.

The breakaway group of SNAP, led by Datuk William Mawan anak Ikom, who is Sarawak's Environment and Health Minister, applied to ROS to set up a new party to be called Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) and their application was approved by the ROS two days ago.

Wong was also asked on attempts to save the party by seeking an urgent meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is also Barisan Nasional chairman.

"I'm not commenting (on the matter)," he said, adding that he would leave the matter to his supporters.

According to the news report, former deputy secretary-general Stanley Jugol had confirmed that attempts had been made by Wong to contact Dr Mahathir and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

However, there has been no confirmation from the Prime Minister's office on any date for the meeting, said Stanley.

On Thursday, Dr Mahathir said that the deregistered SNAP which was one of the four component parties in the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) Sarawak, should be rehabilitated through a new party.

Dr Mahathir said the BN was prepared to consider admitting the new party if an application was made and there should not be any opposition to the setting up of the new party.

Meanwhile, the deregistered party secretary-general Datuk Justine Jingga said the "next course of action" by Wong's faction was likely to be known within the next few days.

He did not specify any date except to say that they were in the process of consulting the deregistered party members.

"We are consulting our ex-members on what to do and to get whatever support on what to do next," he said over the phone from Kuching.

He said it was only fair to give an opportunity to the ex-members to decide what they wanted following the deregistration of their party.

"I don't know if Datuk Amar James Wong had made any appointment to see the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister."

"I am not in position to disclose anything since any appointment to see the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister will be in Datuk Amar's personal capacity since the party has been deregistered," he said.

-- BERNAMA

AT FA AAM