

08/11/2002

Mawan grateful for 'accommodating attitude' of PM

KUCHING, Thurs. - State Environment and Public Health Minister Datuk William Mawan Ikom said he was "very touched" by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's understanding of the plight of former members of the deregistered Sarawak National Party (SNAP).

"That he hinted willingness to admit a new party to be formed by us speaks well of his understanding of our plight," he said.

Mawan said he expected the registration of the new party, Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP), to be approved by the Registrar of Societies within a month.

An application to register the party was submitted to the ROS in Kuala Lumpur on Nov 5, hours after SNAP was deregistered by registrar Datuk Ismail Dolah Harun for its failure to resolve its leadership crisis.

The factions in the party showed themselves when Bintulu MP Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing was expelled in April. Mawan and Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min, who led the factions, then became embroiled in a dispute over the party presidency.

Mawan, who has been named the pro-tem president of SPDP, thanked Dr Mahathir and Sarawak Chief Minister and State Barisan Nasional head Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud for their accommodating attitude.

He said there was no need for former members to appeal to the Home Ministry or courts against the ROS' decision.

Instead, they should join the new party once it had been registered. "Forming SPDP is a way of rehabilitating SNAP. Follow our way, my way," he said.

Mawan said if it was the wishes of the majority, SPDP could later be renamed SNAP Baru through a resolution at the party's (SPDP) triennial general meeting or extraordinary general meeting.

This afternoon Mawan, the assemblyman for Pakan, and ex-SNAP leaders met with Taib and submitted their applications to join the national coalition.

Those who submitted their applications were Tourism Assistant Minister Peter Nyarok Entri (Krian), Infrastructure Development and Communications Assistant Minister Dr Judson Sakai Tagal (Telang Usan), Peter Nansian Ngusie (Tasik Biru) and Sylvester Entrie Muran (Marudi).

Mawan said they also submitted an application on behalf of Richard Wong (Limbang) who could not be present at the meeting.

MPs who also made submissions were Deputy Minister of National Unity and Community Development Dr Tiki Lafe (Mas Gading), Datuk Seri Peter Tinggom Kamarau (Saratok), Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing (Bintulu) and Jacob Sagan Dugau (Baram).

Mawan said they did not name the BN component party that they wanted to join.