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Do not oppose PBS re-entry, BN component parties urged

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KOTA KINABALU, Mon. - All 13 Barisan Nasional component parties have been urged not to object to Parti Bersatu Sabah's re-admission into the coalition when the BN supreme council meets on Jan 31 to discuss the issue.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said component party leaders are scheduled to give their views on the matter and, from information he has received, none of them is expected to object.

Under the BN constitution, the admission of a new member requires the consensus of all component parties.

The component parties are Umno, MCA, MIC, Gerakan, Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Sarawak (PBB), Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), Sarawak National Party (SNAP), Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS), People Progressive Party (PPP), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Organisation (Upko) and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS).

At a Press conference after opening the Sabah Umno information convention here today, Abdullah, who is also BN deputy chairman, said, "Their views will be taken into account."

PBS president Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan and deputy president Dr Maximus Ongkili submitted the party's application to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Nov 15.

On whether there will be a State Cabinet reshuffle to accommodate the PBS if it was welcomed back, Abdullah said the PBS had not imposed conditions for its re-entry.

Pairin and several other top PBS leaders were among those invited to attend the opening of the Sabah Umno information convention.

Meanwhile, Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the party's training centre in Kuala Lumpur would be turned into an institution to groom future leaders.

"Lower level leaders would be exposed to the latest leadership know-how and provided with comprehensive information on current issues at the local, regional and global levels.

"Such an institution is crucial to ensure that Umno, as the backbone of the Government, continues to be strong."

Muhyiddin, who presented a working paper entitled "The People's Aspiration as the Pillar of National Leadership" at the convention, said a similar centre might be established in Sabah as it had the largest Umno membership.

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