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Pairin-BN

PAIRIN THANKS PM AND DPM FOR PBS' RE-ENTRY INTO BN

KOTA KINABALU, Jan 23 (Bernama) -- Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan has expressed the party's wholehearted thanks and appreciation to the Barisan Nasional (BN) for readmitting the party without any condition.

"On behalf of the PBS, its members and supporters, I would like to take this opportunity to express our wholehearted thanks and appreciation to the BN and in particular Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as chairman of the BN, for having given the application the positive consideration and approval," Pairin said.

He also thanked Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for his part in paving the way towards PBS' readmission into the BN and others who had worked behind the scene to smoothen the process.

Speaking to reporters here soon after the announcement on the PBS' readmission to the BN today, Pairin said that he also thanked the prime minister "for having forgiven me, in particular, in the process."

"The approval for PBS' re-entry into the BN will start a new chapter of better relationship within Malaysia and within Sabah," he said.

Pairin said: "Now the time has come to put our shoulders to the wheel of development and work together more with focused attention to not only the infrastructural requirements of Sabah but in particular to resolve rural poverty and other social problems related to uneven distribution of wealth and income," he said.

He gave the assurance that the party would do its level best to give expression to "our patriotic commitment as Malaysians" and as leaders of a party now in the BN.

Asked on the party's move to leave the national coalition abruptly on the eve of the 1990 general election and on the possibility that it could be repeated, Pairin said the matter was now history.

"I have no intention of repeating (such a move). If I wanted to, there is therefore no need now for the PBS to apply to rejoin (the BN)," he said.

Expressing relief that the PBS' application has finally been approved, Pairin said he hoped that in time, those who were still apprehensive about PBS' intention to return to the BN, would understand the party's sincerity.

Asked whether the PBS' readmission into the BN would mean that the check and balance system in Sabah politics would no longer be in existence, Pairin said that he did not think so.

"We will definitely proceed with our role as a responsible party. This we can certainly carry out as we have seen that in the BN, component parties also express their own views," he said.

"Furthermore, in Malaysia, there are still the opposition parties. Therefore there will not be a situation as if there is no opposing views. As such, the system of check and balance still exist," he said.

With the readmission of the PBS which now has eight assemblymen, the Sabah state legislative assembly now consist of 100 per cent BN assemblymen.

Asked what the party would do next, Pairin said: "To continue our struggle and to work together in the context of partnership rather than in the context of an opposition party."

-- BERNAMA

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