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Wong, Kurup attend BN supreme council meeting

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - It was a recognition of sorts for embattled SNAP president Datuk James Wong Kim Min and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah president Datuk Seri Joseph Kurup when they were invited to attend the Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting today.

Wong is embroiled in a tussle with a rival faction in his party led by its vice-president Datuk William Mawan Ikom, and the party is facing the possibility of being deregistered by the Register of Society.

Kurup too is involved in a leadership tussle with former deputy president Datuk Jeffrey Kitingan, with both claiming they were legally elected by the delegates.

BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamad Rahmat said Wong and Kurup were officially recognised as presidents of their parties until there is a decision by the Registrar of Societies on their position.

"As far as we are concerned, they are still the leaders ...that is why they are invited to today's meeting.

"Our record shows that Wong and Kurup are still the presidents ...thus both they and their representatives can attend the meeting on behalf of SNAP and PBRs."

Wong said he was heartened by the recognition as it showed that his rival was not recognised by the BN leadership.

Mohamad said the meeting discussed the possibility of having affiliate parties as a sign of appreciation for parties outside the coalition which had been supportive of BN.

He said the affiliated component members would have lesser power than full-fledged members.

"We do not have a particular party (in mind) to be suggested (for affiliation). However, when the IPF was mentioned (during the meeting), the MIC rejected the proposal, thus we dropped the idea," he said.

Mohamad said the meeting also unanimously passed an amendment to officially establish the post of deputy chairman for BN, BN Youth and BN Wanita.

"We need a deputy chairman to chair BN meetings when chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is not around," he said.