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PM: BN may re-admit SNAP through new party

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - The Barisan Nasional is prepared to consider re-admitting the deregistered Sarawak National Party (SNAP) which should be rehabilitated through a new party, BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said if an application was made by the new party, it would be considered.

He did not foresee any opposition to the admission.

"We work by consensus and since there is now no SNAP in BN, it cannot oppose the admission of a new party," he said after launching Proton's two new models at Dataran Putra.

On the possibility of two new parties being set up by former SNAP leaders and both applying to join BN, he said: "We will have to assess that."

The Registrar of Societies Datuk Ismail Dolah Harun announced the deregistration of SNAP two days ago following the party's failure to resolve its leadership crisis.

The party had four Members of Parliament including National Unity and Social Development Deputy Minister Tiki Lafe and six state assemblymen.

The Sarawak BN yesterday decided that SNAP elected representatives could choose to "park themselves temporarily" in any of the state BN component parties - Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu, Sarawak United People's Party and Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak - until a permanent solution was found.

Datuk William Mawan Ikom, who is State Environment and Health Minister, and his faction have applied to the ROS to set up a new party to be called Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party.

In Kuching, State BN chairman and Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said elected representatives of SNAP needed to apply to be members of any of the three BN parties in the State.

"Once their new party is registered, they can resign," he said.

Meanwhile, Bintulu MP Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing, whose expulsion from the party in April by president Datuk Amar James Wong Kim Min caused a split and triggered the crisis, urged members of the deregistered SNAP to refrain from questioning the ROS over his decision.

He was disappointed with some members, aligned to Wong, for questioning the ROS' decision.

"They should analyse the root cause of the deregistration instead of questioning the decision.

"Although the deregistration came as a big blow for all in the party, nothing can be achieved by simply blaming the ROS," he said in a statement.

He was commenting on the protest yesterday by 11 former SNAP branch chairmen against the ROS.