

01 JUL 2002

Abdullah-Succession

UP TO BN COMPONENT PARTIES TO ELECT THEIR LEADERS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that it is up to Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties to elect their respective leaders.

"And it is up to the leaders to decide when they would like to go or when they would like to hand over to the next generation of leaders," Abdullah said.

"I think that it is left to our component parties and their respective leaders to decide what they would like to do with their own parties. It is up to them entirely," he said when asked to comment on BN component party leaders who had expressed their desire to step down from party posts.

Abdullah, who is also the BN deputy chairman, said that succession was something which should not be forced on any BN component party leader.

"This is something that we cannot force upon them. But I hope they will understand that smooth transition of power is important for the continued success of the party they lead," said Abdullah who has been named by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as his successor.

Earlier Abdullah opened the conference of E-Government in Malaysia here.

MCA deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek on Friday had said that he was willing to resign from all party posts provided the MCA leadership drew a comprehensive leadership succession plan.

Abdullah was also asked whether such remarks would create problems within the MCA since Lim and party President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik had given priority to party unity based on the "Dr Mahathir Peace and Stability Plan for the MCA."

Under the Prime Minister's plan, both leaders retained their positions in the party when nominations closed on Monday.

"I think if they work hard...and work well on the peace plan that the prime minister had suggested to them, I think things will work out well for the MCA," Abdullah said.

-- BERNAMA

RV ZS AAM