

BN to amend constitution at year end
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The meeting of BN supreme council last night decided to hold a convention to discuss amendments to the ruling coalition's constitution at the end of the year.

BN chairperson Najib Razak said that the amendments to the constitution were among efforts aimed at strengthening the coalition besides making the coalition more open and inclusive.



He said a special committee, to be chaired by Hishammuddin Hussein, had been formed to study the proposed amendments to the coalition constitution.

"The details will be studied by the management committee as well as the special committee under Hishammuddin which will be approved by the supreme council before we table them at the convention," he told reporters after chairing the first BN supreme council meeting this year.

Najib said that at the convention, a formal policy would be formulated to give recognition to three groups that were keen to support the government.

The three groups were individuals who wanted to join the BN, political parties that were keen to support the BN, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that were friendly to the BN, he said.

"We don't have a formal policy on these three groups yet. So, it is of utmost importance that we determine what is the formal policy needed so that these groups who like and support the BN can be given appropriate recognition later," he said.

Getting ready for Sarawak state polls

On the People's Progressive Party's (PPP) treasurer-general T Muthulingam's request to the prime minister yesterday to assist in resolving the party's internal crisis, Najib stressed that he would not interfere in the affairs of any BN component party.

"That is between the PPP president (M Kayveas) and I. We will discuss what is necessary but usually, we will not interfere in the affairs of any component party.

"We hope they can resolve the matter by themselves," he said.

Najib said the supreme council meeting today also discussed the Sarawak state election which must be held by the middle of next year at the latest.

He said other component parties would assist in strengthening the BN in Sarawak and implement programmes that fulfilled the wishes and aspirations of the people.

"We take into consideration that Sarawak must hold the state election on a date which would be announced later and like usual, we will all assist in efforts to further strengthen the BN's position in Sarawak as well as the programmes that need to be implemented to

fulfill the wishes and aspirations of Sarawakians," he said.

Najib said that under infrastructure development, an additional allocation would be given to implement the development agenda in the state as well as in Sabah.

'Anwar will get a fair hearing'

Commenting on the statement by PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang who criticised the action of the 50 Australian lawmakers for interfering in the sodomy trial of Anwar Ibrahim, Najib said: "It appears that the PAS president fully understands the actual situation that as a sovereign nation, whatever we do is our right.

Abdul Hadi today lambasted the action of the Australian MPs concerned and wanted the Anwar sodomy trial to be resolved according to the country's judicial system without the influence of any outside elements.

Najib said Hadi's statement showed that he did not agree with the views of the Australian MPs who claimed that Anwar's sodomy trial was a political move or a 'political trial'.

"We have never adopted such an attitude and we will ensure that the principle of fair process will apply to everyone concerned including in the case involving Anwar Ibrahim.

"We will get a fair hearing, that is the assurance that we can give," he added.

- *Bernama*

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