

## **Umno Respects Taib's Decision To Step Down As Sarawak Chief Minister - Zahid Hamidi**

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KUCHING, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- Umno, as a component party of the Barisan Nasional (BN), respects the decision of Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) president Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud to step down as the chief minister of Sarawak, said Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said the BN component parties always respect every decision made by the leadership of fellow component parties.

"Umno is of the opinion that as a component party of the BN, it must respect every decision of the leaders of fellow component parties, in this case PBB led by Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud, who is the chief minister of Sarawak.

"Any decision arrived at through consultations in the party should be respected by Umno," he told a news conference after attending the 42nd Rela (People's Volunteer Corps) anniversary celebration at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCKK), here.

Also present was PBB senior vice-president Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan.

Ahmad Zahid, who is the Home Minister, said that as a member of the BN Supreme Council he also understood that the decision was made in the best interests of the Sarawak government.

"Surely, the matter had been discussed (at the party level). This shows the maturity of Sarawak politics. Any change in the leadership is surely in accordance with the Sarawak state constitution," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the transition would be done in accordance with the mould of Sarawak politics and hence the need to respect the decision made.

"The BN, as an organisation of 13 parties, should accept the fact that Abdul Taib will make the announcement (of his retirement) officially.

"The chief minister has informed that he will seek an audience with the Yang Dipertua Negeri on Feb 15 (Saturday). I think what he is doing should be regarded as his personal right as the chief minister and leader of a BN component party," he said.

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