

Malay, Kadazan/Dusun and Chinese leaders to serve equal 'terms'

# Proposal to rotate Sabah CM's post

By K. P. Waran and Joniston Bangkuai

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. — The post of Sabah Chief Minister will be rotated equally between Malay-Muslim, Kadazan/Dusun and Chinese leaders if the Barisan Nasional is voted into power in the State, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced today.

The Prime Minister said apart from ensuring that the three major races played an important role in the development of the State, the move would also give them an opportunity to lead the State Government.

Speaking at a Press conference at the end of his two-day visit to Sabah, Dr Mahathir said this was the first time a declaration was made that a Chinese could become the Chief Minister of Sabah.

grammes and allocations to be implemented to bring about a new Sabah," he said.

The BN manifesto is expected to be made public on Feb 7, which is nomination day. (See picture on Page 4.)

He said past experiences had shown that it was difficult to work with the present PBS Government, especially since it left the BN in October 1990 just before the general election.

He said the Federal Government provided allocations to Sabah as per the requirements of the law.

"If Barisan Nasional comes to power, all its energies would be focused on bringing development to the State including new allocations and development programmes," he said, reiterating his earlier statement that the Federal Government would ensure there is

gain power. After that, Pairin had tried to make the people hate the Federal Government and possibly was now trying to get the Chinese in the State to hate Yong.

Dr Mahathir said the door for the PBS to rejoin the BN was not closed, but its re-entry had to be with certain conditions.

He added that it would also be difficult to re-admit a member who had "stabbed the BN in the back".

Asked whether he had met Sabah Foundation director Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan, Dr Mahathir said the encounter was before the State Legislative Assembly was dissolved.

"I did not know then that there was going to be an election in Sabah."

He said he was curious to know what kind of a person

When asked whether the State Constitution needed to be amended to allow for the rotation of Chief Ministers, he said this was not necessary since it was a party decision.

Citing Penang as an example, he said the Chief Ministership was being held by the Gerakan although the party had fewer State Assemblymen than Umno.

"Just like in Penang ... it is not in the State or party constitutions. But as political realists, we take all these into consideration. When Umno makes a promise it would adhere to it. This is our approach in Sabah too."

Asked for his impression at the end of his visit here, Dr Mahathir said he sensed an increasing feeling towards a change in Government, especially since the present Parti Bersatu Sabah has not brought much development, resulting in many people suffering.

"Under the Barisan Nasional manifesto, we intend to build a 'New Sabah' which is to be developed on par with other States. Sabah has the potential to be turned into a developed State, surpassing some of the other States.

"We have many pro-

no mismanagement in the State.

Asked to comment on his talks with Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Dr Mahathir said party leaders wanted more time to discuss the issues with party members and added that SAPP has been given until Thursday to decide whether they wanted to join the BN.

He said SAPP could also join BN after the election.

He added that seat allocations and the list of candidates would also be announced on Thursday. The BN component parties in Sabah have agreed to abide by his decision on both issues.

All BN candidates would be required to use the BN symbol.

When asked about claims by PBS president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan that SAPP president Yong Teck Lee was one of prime movers of the decision by PBS to leave the BN, Dr Mahathir said Yong could have realised now that Pairin had used him (Yong) and the Chinese in the State as a tool to fulfil Pairin's own interest.

He said that Pairin had used the sentiments of hate against former Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh to

Jeffrey has become after his release from detention under the Internal Security Act.

"I knew him for a long time so I want to know what he has become, then I had a chat with him, that's all," he said.

The Prime Minister said Jeffrey was on his own now and could do whatever he wanted.

He said if Jeffrey had the people of Sabah at heart he must make the right decision in his struggle.

"If he only wants to think of his family, then he is making the wrong decision," he added.

He also said that Jeffrey, who is the younger brother of the Chief Minister, seemed to understand the stand of the Federal Government in the context of Sabah as part of Malaysia.

Jeffrey was detained under the ISA in May 1991 for alleged involvement in a plot to pull Sabah out of Malaysia.

He was released on Dec 22 last year and placed under restricted residence in Seremban. The restricted residence order was lifted on

□ PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 2, COL 4

# Pairin not qualified to lead, says PM

□ FROM PAGE ONE

Jan 19 paving the way for Jeffrey to return to Sabah.

To a question on whether Jeffrey would be accepted into the Barisan Nasional, Dr Mahathir said: "Well if he subscribes to BN's principles ... why not."

Asked if he had met Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Bernard Dompok who was reported to be contemplating to leave the PBS, Dr Mahathir said he had not met him but has heard that many Kadazans were leaving the party because Pairin was not fighting for their cause but for his own self-interest.

He said after being convicted of corruption, Pairin should have apologised to the people of Sabah for his misdeeds and retired from politics.

"Whether he becomes Chief Minister or not, he is not qualified to lead the people of Sabah especially since he is convicted of corruption," he said.

On the possibility of former Sabah Affairs Minister Tun Mustapha Datu Harun contesting in the coming State election, Dr Mahathir said he and the people of Sabah had a lot of respect for him but certain quarters might want to use him as a tool to further their political interest.

He added it was up to Mustapha to decide whether or not he wanted to contest.