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Salleh-amendments

AMENDMENTS TO SABAH LAWS ONLY TO STRENGTHEN ITS CABINET

KOTA KINABALU, April 17 (Bernama) -- Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Mohd Salleh Said Keruak reiterated today that the proposed amendments to five of the controversial state legislaion were to strengthen its Cabinet system.

It was not in any way intended to reduce the Chief Minister's powers, and in fact it was meant for a more effective administration.

"We are only transferring the powers of the Chief Minister to the Cabinet, and not reducing them," he told reporters after chairing the weekly state Cabinet meeting at the State Legislative Assembly Chamber here.

The assembly is scheduled to meet on April 25 and 26 to discuss the amendments to the Forestry Enactment 1968, Land Ordinance (Chapter 68), Mining Ordinance 1960, Yayasan Sabah Enactment 1966 and Delegation of Power Enactment 1963.

The amendments to the Yayasan Sabah Enactment provides powers for the Yang Dipertua Negeri to appoint the Yayasan's Board of Trustee Chairman on the recommendation of the Cabinet.

Salleh said last week that the amendments would only involve five state laws and not the constitution as earlier proposed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir had stated that the constitutional amendment was necessary to reduce the Chief Minister's powers, which were too excessive compared with the chief executives of the other states, since the Chief Minister had absolute powers over such matters as approving applications for land, forest concessions and mining.

Salleh said the amendments to the Yayasan Sabah Enactment was in no way related to the appointment of the Chief Minister, which had to be rotated, once in two yeares, to represent the Islamic and non-Islamic Bumiputeras as well as the Chinese communities.

The decision on this change of the Chief Minister post, now held by Salleh representing the Islamic Bumiputeras, would be made by the Prime Minister. --Bernama

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