

20 FEB 1996

Mahathir-Sabah

MAHATHIR GETS MANDATE TO DECIDE ON CM ROTATION ISSUE

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today all the eight Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties in Sabah have agreed to leave it to him to decide on the rotation of the Chief Minister's post.

He said he had met the component parties leaders and they had given him the mandate to decide whether to continue with the rotation system or otherwise.

"I will make a decision in time," he told reporters at the Hari Raya open house in his official residence "Sri Perdana," here.

Dr Mahathir had pledged to rotate the chief minister's post among the three major communities in the state during the state elections in February 1994.

The tenure of Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Said Keruak ends on March 17 and Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) president Datuk Yong Teck Lee is expected to succeed him under the rotation system.

The rotation issue became a controversy when the component parties failed to reach a consensus on the matter at the state BN meeting on Jan 8.

The parties are Umno, SAPP, Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS), Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS), Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu (Akar Bersatu), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), MCA and Gerakan.

Dr Mahathir had said after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting early this month that he would meet separately all the component parties from Sabah to discuss the issue.

The supreme council also gave him the full mandate to decide on the matter.

Dr Mahathir said all the eight component parties in Sabah had agreed to accept whatever decision he made on the rotation issue.

Asked whether he would go to Sabah to announce his decision, Dr Mahathir said he had yet to decide but "maybe I will go one day."

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said he would take his time to decide on the matter.

"There is no hurry...this matter can be resolved amicably unless of course the press makes the situation worse," he added. -- BERNAMA

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