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Salleh-amendments

NO BACKING OUT OF PROPOSAL TO AMEND SABAH LAWS

KOTA KINABALU, April 27 (Bernama) -- Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) has no plans to scrap the proposal to amend five state laws that is aimed at reducing the Chief Minister's powers, Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Said Keruak said today.

The State Legislative Assembly sitting to debate the proposed amendments, which has been postponed to June 17 and 18, would be held on the new dates scheduled, he said.

"Sabah BN is sensitive to the feelings of its component parties and in view of some BN elected representatives' request for more time to study the amendments, we agreed to postpone the meeting," he told reporters after opening the St Simon Education Complex here.

The assembly was supposed to have met last Thursday and Friday to debate the proposed amendments.

Salleh, who is Sabah BN Chairman, said he wanted to clear any doubts on the proposed amendments so that whatever decisions made would get the support of BN elected representatives and the people.

The affected laws are the Forest Enactment 1968, Land Ordinance (Chapter 69), Mining Ordinance 1960, Sabah Foundation Enactment 1966 and Delegation of Powers Enactment 1963. The amendments are aimed at transferring certain powers of the Chief Minister to the state Cabinet.

Salleh said he had asked BN elected representatives to explain the rationale of the amendments to the people so that the matter would not be politicised by certain groups.

"The thrust of the amendments is for the Chief Minister to refer important matters like on land and forestry to the state Cabinet."

On his recent meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Salleh said he only briefed Anwar on the postponement of the assembly sitting.

He has also secured an appointment with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the same matter.

Salleh said the postponement of the assembly sitting had nothing to do with the decision being awaited on the proposed rotation of the Chief Minister's post among the three major communities in Sabah.

"The rotation matter has been left to the Prime Minister to decide," he said. -- BERNAMA

JS MTA YBY