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Amendments

SABAH CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS TO BE TABLED IN ASSEMBLY THIS MONTH

KOTA KINABALU, April 3 (Bernama) -- Proposed amendments to the Sabah Constitution will be tabled at the State Legislative Assembly sitting on April 25-26.

Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Said Keruak said today State Attorney-General Datuk Stephen Foo had completed the draft of the proposed amendments aimed at limiting the existing powers of the Chief Minister.

"The State Cabinet which met today agreed to the tabling after it gave some views on the draft amendments," he told reporters after the weekly Cabinet meeting, here.

Salleh said the thrust of the proposed amendments was to further strengthen the state cabinet system which emphasised collective decision-making and reducing the powers of the Chief Minister, now considered to be too wide in scope.

In drafting the proposed amendments, the views of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was also taken into account, he added. He, however, declined to elaborate on the scope of the proposed amendments.

Dr Mahathir raised the need for amendments to be made to the state Constitution, a process that would take time and, thus, necessitated the extension of Salleh's term beyond March 17, when he was to have handed over the post to the state's Chinese community representative in keeping with the promise made by the Prime Minister to rotate the post among the main communities in the state once in two years.

Salleh also said the Sabah Foundation had implemented nearly all the recommendations made by the accounting firm of Price Waterhouse to re-organise the state body.

Asked if the Price Waterhouse report of its audit of the foundation would be made public as promised earlier, he said part of it had already been made public.

Commenting on the alleged involvement of Sabah trade consultant Datuk Alfred Chin in firearms smuggling into Taiwan, Salleh said stricter enforcement was needed over the use of the VIP Room at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport.

"The protocol section should ensure that only listed VIPs are allowed to use the VIP Room," he added. -- BERNAMA

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