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Barisan urged not to appoint assemblymen

PENANG, Mon. - The Barisan Nasional, which won the Sabah election, was today urged not to proceed with the appointment of six nominated members in the State Assembly although this was provided for in the State Constitution.

In making the call, DAP deputy chairman Karpal Singh said the provision went against the "essence, grain and spirit of democratic process".

He urged BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is Prime Minister, to refrain from invoking the provision "so as not to bring disrepute to the democratic process as universally understood".

In the election, the BN won 31 seats, one seat short of acquiring a two-third majority in the assembly.

Karpal, also Jelutong Member of Parliament said by invoking the provision, the BN would have a comfortable two-thirds majority.

"Co-option into the State Assembly is an indirect way of putting into the assembly someone who has been rejected by the people in an election," he said in a statement today.

"It is reported that former Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok is keeping an open option to be a nominated assemblyman, despite having stated during the election campaign that he would retire from politics if he lost his Moyog seat. Going against his word would be tantamount to committing deception of the constituents of Moyog."

On the same subject, DAP central executive committee member Chow Kon Yeow claimed that although the BN had been returned to power in Sabah, the majority of Sabah people had voted against it.

"Despite winning 31 of the 48 seats and claims of overwhelming support for the BN, the ruling coalition had only managed to receive 46.6 per cent of the total valid votes," said Chow.

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