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Dissolution date: Sabah BN to study various factors

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PENAMPANG, Sun. - The State Barisan Nasional needs to take into account various factors when deciding on the date for the dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly, Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said today.

He said the forthcoming Hari Raya and Chinese New Year celebrations as well as the Haj Pilgrimage season in March were among the factors that had to be considered.

He said the dissolution date was discussed at the meeting between the nine Sabah BN leaders and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur yesterday but nothing concrete was decided.

"We briefed the Prime Minister about the State BN's preparations for the State elections," he told reporters after presenting a State Government contribution of RM500,000 for the Fook Tet Kung temple building fund in Donggongon, here, today.

He said the meeting with Dr Mahathir was not held to specifically discuss the dissolution date and the allocation of seats, adding that other matters such as development issues were also deliberated.

Pressed further if he had a date in mind for the dissolution, Dompok said the current term of the Assembly was coming to an end.

The five-year term of the current 48-member Assembly, elected on Feb 18 and 19, 1994, ends on March 18.

While the dissolution is decided by the Government of the day, the dates for nomination and polling are determined by the Election Commission.

Sabah Umno liaison chief, Datuk Osu Sukam, had on his return from Kuala Lumpur yesterday told reporters that Sabah BN leaders had a fair idea when the Assembly was to be dissolved.

Osu, who is Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, was among the State BN component leaders who attended the meeting with Dr Mahathir who is the national BN chairman.

Asked if problems pertaining to the allocation of seats were holding him from deciding the Assembly's dissolution date, Dompok said there were not much differences among the BN component parties on the matter.

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

Umno has 21 seats in the Assembly, followed by PDS (11), SAPP (five), Akar (three), PBRS (two), MCA (one), Independent (one) and the Opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (four).

On the selection of candidates, Dompok said it was not a problem as the BN had already gone through so many elections.

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