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Dompok welcomes Gerakan's decision not to contest

Jaswinder Kaur

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. - State Barisan Nasional chairman Tan Sri Bernard Dompok today welcomed Gerakan's decision not to contest in the next Sabah elections.

"BN is thankful to component parties which will not be contesting in the next election as we have many parties in Sabah. Whoever decides not to contest is good news for us," Dompok said.

He added there was no major difference in opinion among the State BN component parties on seat allocations.

Dompok, who is Chief Minister, was asked to comment on Gerakan's recent decision not to contest in the elections.

Sabah Gerakan acting chairman Tan Sri Soong Siew Hoong was quoted as saying that the decision had been conveyed at last week's meeting between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Sabah BN leaders led by Dompok.

Soong however said Gerakan would assist the Sabah BN in the election campaign to ensure the ruling coalition formed the next State Government.

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

Dompok, who was met at Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam's open house in Likas, was also grateful for Sarawak BN's decision to send component party members to assist in the coming State elections.

When asked if the State Legislative Assembly would be dissolved soon after the Hari Raya festivities, Dompok said:

"This is the first day of Hari Raya and Hari Raya is celebrated for one month."

Dompok was also asked to comment on talk that Umno had requested for the dissolution of the Assembly soon after Hari Raya but that other component parties, including PDS of which Dompok is president, were not keen to call for the elections yet.

Dompok said all opinions of component parties would be taken into account by the BN leadership.

"There is no big difference in dates preferred for the elections... they differ by about two or three days only," he said.

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