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Sabah-Chong

LDP'S CHONG WAITING FOR PM'S "BLESSINGS" TO RETURN TO SABAH POLITICS

KOTA KINABALU, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- LDP president Datuk Chong Kah Kiat confirmed today he is eyeing the Kudat seat in the coming state election but is waiting for the greenlight from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"If PM agrees to my request (to come back), I'll be back (in Sabah). I want to go back to Kudat," said Chong, who is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, confirming speculations of his plans to return to Sabah politics.

The Liberal Democratic Party president, who hails from Kudat, was a former assemblyman there and served in the state cabinet under the Berjaya-led Barisan Nasional (BN) government which ruled Sabah from 1976 to 1985.

In the 1995 general election, Chong was defeated in the Marudu parliamentary seat by Datuk Amir Kahar Tun Mustapha of the PBS. Amir Kahar has since joined Umno.

Chong was appointed a senator and made a federal minister in June, 1995.

Asked if his intention to return to the state is because he hoped to become the chief minister later under the rotation system, he said: "Absolutely no."

Pressed further, he said: "I'm not that interested. What I'm very interested is to see BN retain its power. That is my hope.

"Rotation to me is not important. Team work in BN is important. The most important thing is to have a BN government," he said.

Under the BN government, the the chief minister's post is rotated among the Muslim Bumiputeras, Chinese and non-Muslim Bumiputeras.

On the number of seats sought by the party for the coming election, Chong said a few names had been forwarded to the prime minister.

"In terms of seat allocation, we leave it to PM. If we are given two or three seats, we will take it," he said, adding that MCA and Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), which along with LDP are Chinese-based, had set their sights on at least 10 Chinese-majority seats.

Asked if more than one party wanted a particular seat, he said they would compromise under the BN's family spirit.

--BERNAMA

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