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Sabah-Rotation

SABAHANS INVITED TO STATE VIEWS ON ROTATION SYSTEM

KOTA KINABALU, March 23 (Bernama) -- Sabahans may use various channels, including NGOs and political parties, to express their views on the system of rotating the chief minister's post among the state's three main communities.

Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam said this here today when commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that it was up to Sabahans themselves to decide if the system should be continued.

Osu said the state government was seeking a holistic view on the matter and one that reflected the desires of most people.

"We seek their honest opinion as we don't want to do anything that will create problems," he told reporters after attending the swearing-in ceremony for Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Wilfred Bumburing and 14 assistant ministers at Istana Negeri.

Osu said the Barisan Nasional (BN) government introduced the rotation system in the state as a means of upholding unity among the people.

He said the results of the recent state election, however, showed that many people voted for opposition parties that were against the rotation system.

"This could be among the reasons why the prime minister was leaving it to the people to decide whether the rotation system should be continued or not," said Osu, who is Sabah Umno chief.

In the election, BN won 31 seats and the opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) 17.

The BN seats were won through Umno (24), Parti Demokratik Sabah or PDS (two), Sabah Progressive Party or SAPP (three) and Liberal Democratic Party or LDP (two).

Meanwhile, Bumburing, who is also PDS deputy president, said it was appropriate that the decision on the rotation system be made by the people.

"The government will certainly discuss the matter from time to time, and we will at the same time respect the views of Sabahans," he said.

Bumburing, who is also the state infrastructure development minister, said the people could voice their views through the mass media, elected representatives and NGOs.

Meanwhile, LDP President and State Tourism, Environment, Science and Technology Development Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat agreed that the people should be given the opportunity to express their views on the rotation system.

"I am as eager as the prime minister to know what are the views of the people in this matter.

"We cannot jump to conclusion but should give them a chance to express their views," he said.

--BERNAMA

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