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Mahathir-Sabah

UP TO SABAHANS, SAYS PM ON CM ROTATION

ALOR SETAR, March 22 (Bernama) -- It is up to the people of Sabah to decide if they want to continue with the present system of rotating the state's chief ministership, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"If the majority of the people think the rotation system should not be continued, the government is willing to review the matter," he told a news conference here at the end of a two-day visit to Kedah.

The prime minister said this when asked if the government was prepared to review the system given Umno's huge numerical advantage over the other parties in the Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) which scored a big win to retain power in the March 12 and 13 state election.

Of the 31 seats in the State Legislative Assembly won by the BN, Umno scored a 100 per cent success rate when all its 24 candidates were elected, while the Sabah Democratic Party (PDS) won only two of the 12 seats it contested, with three seats coming from the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) and two from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The other 17 seats were won by the opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

Asked how the people of Sabah could make known their decision on the matter, Dr Mahathir said they could express their views through the proper channels.

Sabah Umno chief Datuk Osu Sukam was appointed chief minister last week replacing PDS president Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, who also lost in the election.

Under the system, he will after two years be replaced by a BN party leader from the Kadazandusun community and then from the Chinese community.

The prime minister was also asked about the appointment of PDS deputy president Datuk Wilfred Bumburing, who was defeated in the election, as one of Sabah's three deputy chief ministers, and the possibility that due to his seniority, someone who lost the election would be the next chief minister after Osu.

"It is up to the PDS (later) to nominate who among its leaders would be the chief minister. After all, two from the PDS were elected in the election," he added, referring to Datuk Wences Angang and Datuk Siringan Gubat.

Angang was among new state ministers in Osu's cabinet line-up announced over the weekend.

-- BERNAMA

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