

Decision on rotation

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Sabah Barisan Nasional parties to submit

By Raynore Mering

KOTA KINABALU, Fri. — The answer to whether or not the rotation system of the Sabah Chief Ministership will be scrapped will be known within the next two weeks.

All Sabah Barisan Nasional component parties are expected to submit their views in writing to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad by the end of next week.

The Prime Minister had requested for the reports during a meeting with the presidents of the component parties last week to assist him in deciding on the continuity of the system.

Sabah Umno will submit their report soon, said Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam, who is also the

State Umno liaison chief.

He said the party was in the midst of completing the report and he refused to reveal its findings.

"I can't tell you what it contains until the Prime Minister has seen it," he said at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport today.

He had just returned from Kuala Lumpur where he had attended an Umno meeting chaired by Dr Mahathir.

Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu (Akar) and United Pasok Mmogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (Upko) had submitted their reports to Dr Mahathir.

Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) are also expected to hand in their views soon.

Meanwhile, SAPP president Yong Teck Lee, a former Chief Minister, said there was no need for the people to be anxious over the issue and should instead "respect the Prime Minister's decision in resolving the current political situation."

He added that although the rotation system had its strengths and weaknesses, it had been deemed a suitable formula to cater to Sabah's unique political situation in the last seven years.

Responding to Dr Mahathir's comments that the rotation system created "lame duck" Chief Ministers, Yong said, "The lame duck situation only arises in the final few months of the Chief Minister's two-year term.

"But if the outgoing Chief Minis-

system in two weeks

in writing their views to the PM

ter is prepared for the transition and allows the Cabinet to govern, this weakness can be minimised.

"This, I speak from my personal experience."

He said the BN concept of government, which is through consultation, consensus and sensitivity

to the needs of all communities, must be upheld.

"With or without the rotation of the Chief Ministership, the true spirit of BN must be upheld and practised."

Osu's tenure as the Chief Minister will end in the middle of

March.

The rotation system was introduced in 1994 to enable leaders of Sabah's three main communities — the Muslim Bumiputera, the non-Muslim Bumiputera and the Chinese — to take their turns to serve as Chief Minister.