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Group calls for rotation of CM to be scrapped

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KOTA KINABALU, Wed. - Kumpulan Belia Pencinta Nusa (Cintanusa), a newly-formed action group, is to submit a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad calling for the scrapping of the rotation of the post of Sabah Chief Minister.

A copy of the memorandum will also be given to Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Sakaran Dandai.

The memorandum will be submitted to Dr Mahathir during his visit here on Sunday. Sakaran will be given a copy by Friday.

The group, which has 2,000 members, will, however, accept the rotation system if the Chief Minister's tenure is extended to five years, instead of the current two.

The rotation system was introduced by the Barisan Nasional when it took over the State administration in 1994.

Under the current system a representatives of the Muslim Bumiputera, non-Muslim Bumiputera and Chinese communities each hold the post for a two-year period.

Cintanusa chairman Zulkarnain Mahdar said today that the committee would launch a Statewide petition-signing campaign tomorrow in support of the memorandum.

He said the memorandum was formulated after the committee had carried out a six-month survey involving over 6,000 people.

"We found that about 90 per cent, including youths, Government officers and rural folk, did not support the rotation system," he said.

Zulkarnain claimed that Government officers did not like the system because their duties were complicated by each new Chief Minister's policy changes and different approaches.

The committee was not concerned about who the Chief Minister was, he said, but by the short period they were given to serve the people.

"The Prime Minister has said that the system would be discontinued if the people wanted it to end," said Zulkarnain.

The memorandum stated that BN's victory in the 1994 State election was due more to the people wanting a change in government rather than the rotation system.

It said the State should revert to the old system where the Chief Minister should come from the party which had won the most seats during the State election and was supported by the Head of State.

Cintanusa is planning to collect 150,000 signatures by the end of next month. The organisation is also planning a hunger strike at a yet to be fixed venue and date.

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