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Dompok-Rotation

STATE GOVT'S STRENGTH RESTS WITH THE CABINET, SAYS DOMPOK

KUNDASANG, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- The strength of a state government does not solely depend on the tenure of a chief minister serving in the post but also on the efficiency of the state cabinet.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said if the state cabinet was strong and efficient, there would be no major problems despite frequent changes in the state leadership.

"I feel the strength of a state government also lies with the state cabinet whose functions are crucial in a government that often sees leadership changes," he told reporters after launching a search and rescue training by the Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (SMART) at Mount Kinabalu today.

Asked whether the chief ministership rotation in Sabah was suitable, Dompok, who is also United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (UPKO) president, said any system had its advantages and weaknesses.

The rotation system was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during the campaign for the 1994 state election and was implemented when the Barisan Nasional (BN) came to power in Sabah in the same year.

Dompok said: "If we look at Japan, the prime minister normally does not serve for more than two years but the government remains in power up to four years."

"For us in Sabah, definitely there are advantages if the chief minister's tenure was extended to five years. Nevertheless, I feel the two-year term for the chief minister's post was not a hindrance to the state's development."

The unique system enables leaders from the three major communities in Sabah -- Muslim Bumiputeras, non-Muslim Bumiputeras and the Chinese -- to become chief ministers for two years on a rotation basis.

Although the system proceeded smoothly initially, there have been calls by certain groups recently to abolish it while others left it to the wisdom of Dr Mahathir to make a decision.

-- BERNAMA

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