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Chong-Merger

UPKO-PBRS MERGER PROPOSAL A GOOD IDEA, SAYS CHONG

KOTA KINABALU, Dec 6 (Bernama) -- Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat said today any move to strengthen the state's political stability, including a merger proposal by two Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties, should be welcomed.

"There must be a good reason to merge. It must be for the better," he told reporters here after chairing the Malaysia Games 2002 (Sukma 2002) main committee meeting, here.

Chong, who is Sabah BN chairman, said he respect whatever decision by the two Kadazandusun-based parties -- United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (Upko) and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS).

Upko is headed by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and PBRS, by state Minister of Resource Development Tan Sri Joseph Kurup.

Chong said the merger proposal was good for Sabah and with the impending re-entry of opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) into the BN, the state's political arena could be further stabilised.

Asked when the BN would meet to discuss PBS's application to rejoin the ruling coalition, Chong said: "I just read in the papers today that the meeting would be on Sunday, but I have yet to receive the notice (to attend the meeting)."

A local daily, quoting sources, reported today that the meeting to discuss the PBS application would be held Sunday in Kuala Lumpur.

PBS president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan submitted the party's formal application for re-entry into the BN to Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya last month.

-- BERNAMA

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