

19/03/2001

What leaders hope for in line-up

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KOTA KINABALU, Sun. - Barisan Nasional component party leaders in Sabah hope that Chief Minister-designate Datuk Chong Kah Kiat will form a State Cabinet that reflects the true spirit of the coalition's power sharing concept.

The leaders also hope that Chong, who is Liberal Democratic Party president, will choose a Cabinet line-up which will be able to tackle future challenges.

Chong yesterday said he had held a preliminary discussion with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the composition of the new Cabinet and hoped to finalise the line-up by next week.

Sabah Umno Wanita movement head Datuk Dayang Mahani Tun Ahmad Rafaei said the new line-up should reflect the various communities in the State.

"The power sharing concept must be upheld. This is to ensure that co-operation between the different communities in Sabah remains strong.

"I also hope all BN component parties in Sabah support the new Cabinet. If the BN is not strong and we start fighting among ourselves, it will give others the opportunity to take over the State," she said.

Sabah Umno Youth head Tawfiq Abu Bakar Titingan said the movement gave its support to Chong in appointing those with potential into the Cabinet.

"The change in the Cabinet however should not be too drastic to ensure the grassroots continue to support the BN. At the same time, we hope senior government officers will not be transferred due to changes in the Government."

Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) Information Unit head Richard Yong said the party would co-operate with Chong and members of the new Cabinet.

"We are also anxious to know who will be in the Cabinet," he said.

Sabah MCA chairman Edward Khoo said he was certain Chong would be able to discharge his responsibility as Chief Minister in an effective manner.

"We are happy that the BN has upheld the principle of the rotation system and MCA will support Chong for the welfare of the people in Sabah," he said.

On Friday, United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (Upko) president Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said the BN was a sincere Government and would deliver what was due to the Kadazandusun community.

"At present, there are representatives from the Kadazandusun community in the State Cabinet and we hope this will be maintained," he said when asked to comment on the fact that a Kadazandusun had not been appointed Chief Minister as widely speculated.

In the current State Cabinet line-up under the leadership of Datuk Osu Sukam from Umno, there are two ministers and one assistant minister from Upko.

They are Infrastructure Development Minister Datuk Wilfred Bumburing who is also Deputy Chief Minister, Datuk Wences Anggang who is Resource Development and Information Technology Minister and Datuk Siringan Gubat who is Agriculture Development and Food Industry Assistant Minister.