

09 SEP 2003

Musa-Rotation

NO DECISION YET ON MECHANISM TO REVIEW THE ROTATION SYSTEM, SAYS MUSA

KOTA KINABALU, Sept 9 (Bernama) -- The Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) has not decided on the mechanism to be used to determine whether the people want to continue with the rotation system for the Sabah Chief Minister's post or not.

Chief Minister Datuk Musa Aman said the state BN leaders had yet to meet to discuss the matter and it would be decided when it was time to do so.

"We have not discussed it. Nevertheless, we thank and appreciate the view of YAB Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the issue," he told reporters after opening national-level Peyatim Quran Reciters Assembly at Dewan Sa'dah, Wisma Muis, near here today.

Musa, who is also state BN chief, was asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday to leave it to the people of Sabah to decide on whether to continue with the rotation system or not.

This should be given into consideration by the BN when deciding on the matter, Dr Mahathir had said at the opening the 18th Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) congress at the Hongkod Koisaan here.

Asked whether the mechanism would involve discussions with BN component party leaders or through a referendum, Musa said: "We will discuss about the suitable mechanism to be used."

Under the rotation system, a leader from Umno will take over the post of Sabah Chief Minister each time a leader from either the non-Muslim Bumiputera community or the Chinese community completed his term.

Dr Mahathir had proposed the system of rotating the post among the Muslim, non-Muslim bumiputera and Chinese communities during the campaign of the state election in 1994.

This was to give the leader of each community the chance to lead the state government for a term of two years.

The system was implemented when the BN came to power in March 1994 following the collapse of the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

The system was slightly modified in March 2001 to give opportunity to Umno leaders to become Sabah Chief Minister each time a leader from one of the two communities completed his term.

The system had so far saw the appointments of seven chief ministers, namely Tan Sri (now Tun) Sakaran Dandai, Datuk Salleh Tun Said, Datuk Yong Teck Lee, Datuk Bernard Dompok, Datuk Osu Sukam, Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and Datuk Musa Aman.

Asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's call to the BN to win the next state election with landslide victory, Musa said they would do their best to achieve the target.

"We will work hard together with our friends in the BN to ensure a landslide victory for the BN," he said.

The present term of the Sabah state legislative assembly will end on April 12 2004.

-- BERNAMA

NT ABG