

18 NOV 2003

Musa-Rotation

SABAH BN TO DECIDE ON CM ROTATION BEFORE STATE POLLS - MUSA

KOTA KINABALU, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman said today he will call for a State Barisan Nasional (BN) meeting at a right time to discuss whether the rotation system for the chief minister's post should be continued or stopped.

Musa, who is also Sabah BN Chief, said the issue was among various matters to be deliberated on at the meeting which could be held at anytime if the need arose.

Asked whether he would call for the meeting next month, he said, at the moment such a meeting was not necessary but "I will call for a BN meeting to discuss the issue before the state election."

"Usually, if there are important matters that need to be discussed among us, we can hold a BN meeting at anytime," he told reporters after giving away Hari Raya Aidilfitri cakes to the security forces at Menara Tun Mustapha, near here.

He said this when asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi here yesterday that the BN leadership had not decided on whether to continue or discontinue the two-year rotation system for the chief ministership.

Abdullah, who is also BN Chairman, said he would not interfere in the matter but would leave it to the Sabah BN leaders to come to a consensus.

"Since the Prime Minister has said so... we'll follow what he has said," Musa said.

The rotation system for the chief minister's post, introduced by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, has been in practice since the BN formed the state government in March 1994.

The system is aimed at giving an opportunity for the leaders of the three major communities in Sabah -- Muslim Bumiputeras, non-Muslim Bumiputeras and Chinese -- to hold the post for two years.

The system, however, saw a slight adjustment in March 2000 to pave the way for Umno.

Under the amended system, an Umno leader will take over as chief minister after the two-year term of an ethnic group ended.

So far, the system has seen the appointment of seven chief ministers -- Tun Sakaran Dandai, Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak, Datuk Yong Teck Lee, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Datuk Osu Sukam, Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and Musa.

Asked whether Abdullah gave any hints on when the state election would be held during his meeting with Sabah Umno leaders yesterday, Musa said: "Not yet but the Prime Minister asked every member and leader of Umno and BN to be prepared for the election."

"Whatever his advice is, we'll accept and we'll ensure unity among BN components prevails at all times to achieve a resounding victory in the coming election," he said.

Earlier, in his speech, Musa reminded the people of Sabah to always value the contributions and sacrifices of the security forces for the well-being of the country and people.

-- BERNAMA

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